**LSIS** LEARNING
AND SKILLS
IMPROVEMENT
SERVICE

**Quick guide**

# Building progression between Foundation Learning and the Foundation Diploma

This guide aims to support teachers and managers in exploring the potential for progression from Foundation Learning to a Foundation Diploma, as one of the four 14–19 national suites of learning.

This guide will help you to:

- identify the learner opportunities for progression from Foundation Learning to the Foundation Diploma

- understand how to locate additional and specialist learning (ASL) qualifications that would support progression from Foundation Learning to a Foundation Diploma

- consider the next steps you may wish to take in planning and implementing the 14–19 curriculum.

This guide focuses on the opportunities for progression from Foundation Learning to a Foundation Diploma. However, learners may, over time, progress to higher levels of Diplomas and therefore the principles and suggestions shown here will still apply.

This document should be read in conjunction with the following documents available from the LSC website (http://qfr.lsc.gov.uk/flt/support):

- *Foundation Learning Tier: interim guidance* (May 2009)

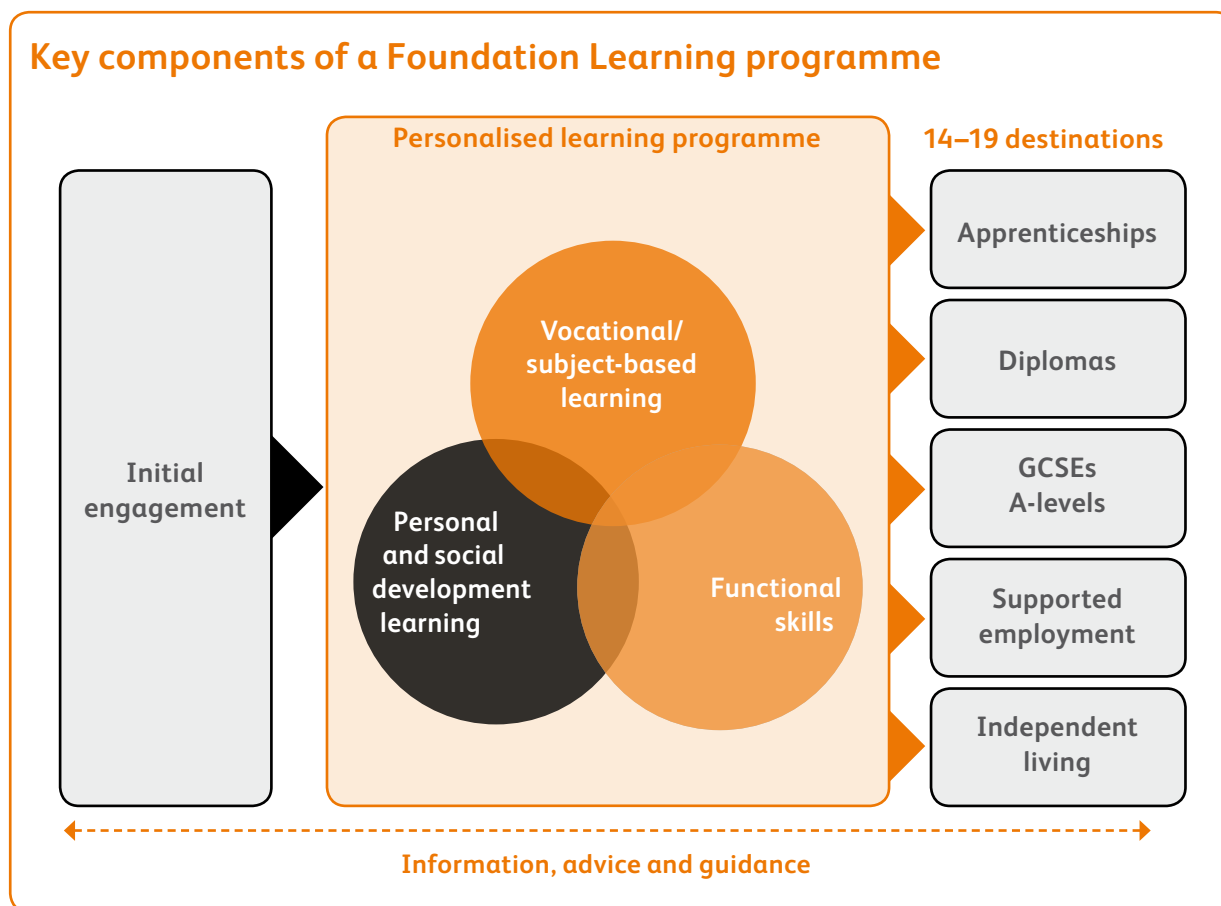- *Foundation Learning Tier: 14–19 delivery guidance for 2009/10* (August 2009).

## What are the four 14–19 national suites of learning, and how does Foundation Learning fit into this picture?

From 2013, learners aged 14–19 will have access to one of the four national suites of learning:

- Apprenticeships

- Diplomas

- Foundation Learning

- general qualifications (eg GCSEs and A levels).

Foundation Learning is an important part of the 14–19 offer as it provides a route for learners working at entry level and level 1. For learners aged 14–19, the onward destination from Foundation Learning is likely to be one of the other three national suites or alternatively to employment, supported employment or independent living, as illustrated in figure 1.

## Figure 1. The Foundation Learning model

### Key components of a Foundation Learning programme

**Personalised learning programme**

**14–19 destinations**

Initial engagement

Vocational/ subject-based learning

Personal and social development learning

Functional skills

Apprenticeships

Diplomas

GCSEs A-levels

Supported employment

Independent living

Information, advice and guidance

## What is Foundation Learning?

Foundation Learning aims to improve the skills of learners at entry level and level 1. Learning throughout the programme is captured in qualifications and units drawn from the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Foundation Learning programmes incorporate vocational and subject-based learning, functional skills and personal and social development (PSD) learning, supported by a wrap-around of assessment, information, advice and guidance (IAG) and ongoing support. Foundation Learning should be delivered alongside statutory requirements for the National Curriculum for 14–16 learners.

## What is the Foundation Diploma?

The Foundation Diploma is an applied level 1 qualification, which will be available as a national entitlement for 14 broad sectors and three subject areas (known as 17 'lines of learning'). It is made up of three components, which must all be completed. Figure 2 shows the components of Diplomas.

## Figure 2. The components of a Diploma

| Principal learning | Generic learning | Additional and specialist learning |
|---|---|---|
| 50% applied learning | Functional skills in English, mathematics and ICT | Complementary learning, adding breadth and depth |
| | Personal, learning and thinking skills | Choice and flexibility |
| | Work experience/ work-related learning (min. 10 days) | |
| | Project | |

## The Diploma – key points

- The additional and specialist learning (ASL) component allows the learner to specialise and/or take up relevant complementary learning. It also allows the learner to select qualifications that support a wider range of progression opportunities.

- The ASL requirement can be met from a single qualification or a combination of qualifications.

- The minimum number of guided learning hours (GLH) for ASL at Foundation level is 120 hours. These are the number of hours of supported learning required to complete the ASL component of the Diploma at this level.

- For each line of learning there is a catalogue of permitted qualifications on the National Database of Qualifications (NDAQ). Within this is a catalogue of permitted qualifications for ASL with qualifications being labelled either additional or specialist.

## How can we support progression from Foundation Learning to a Foundation Diploma?

**Learners undertaking a Foundation Learning programme will need support to develop skills in the three curriculum areas (vocational/subject learning, functional skills and PSD) in ways that will help them to progress to their intended destination.**

Where the destination is a learning programme, such as a Diploma, you will also want to ensure that learners are able to use the qualifications/units gained as part of their future Diploma programme. In selecting units or qualifications that will be useful to them in future programmes, you will be building progression opportunities into their current programme. Figure 3 provides an example of how this might work with functional skills and PSD.

### Figure 3. Building progression, example 1

A learner achieves the following qualifications as part of their personalised Foundation Learning programme:

- **Vocational/subject**:
  - City & Guilds Certificate in Employability and Personal Development (entry 3)
- **Functional skills**:
  - ASDAN Functional Skills (English) (entry 3)
  - ASDAN Functional Skills (Mathematics) (entry 3)
  - ASDAN Functional Skills (ICT) (level 1)
- **PSD**:
  - OCNW Award in Personal Development (entry 3)

The functional skills in ICT at level 1 could contribute towards the functional skills requirement of a learner's subsequent Diploma programme.

The PSD qualifications could be used to develop aspects of the skills required to meet the personal, learning and thinking skills requirement of the Diploma programme.

In some circumstances, learners may be able to gain units and qualifications in their Foundation Learning programme that will count towards the ASL component of the Foundation Diploma. Figure 4 provides an example of how this might work.

## Figure 4. Building progression, example 2

A learner achieves the following qualifications as part of their Foundation Learning programme:

- **Vocational**:
  - ○ ABC Certificate in Practical Environmental and Conservation Skills (level 1)
- **Functional skills**:
  - ○ OCR Functional Skills (English) (level 1)
  - ○ OCR Functional Skills (Mathematics) (entry 3)
  - ○ OCR Functional Skills (ICT) (level 1)
- **PSD**:
  - ○ NOCN Certificate in Skills towards Enabling Progression (entry 3)

The vocational qualification selected also appears in the ASL Diploma catalogue for the Foundation Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment. The learner can, on progressing, use this qualification to count as the ASL for their Foundation Diploma in this line of learning. The GLH for this particular qualification are 170–180 so a student achieving this qualification would fulfil the ASL requirement for a Foundation Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment.

## How can I find out which qualifications can be used in both Foundation Learning and a Foundation Diploma?

### Locating ASL qualifications using the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ)

- Go to the Diploma Catalogue pages of NDAQ at www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/DiplomaCatalogueSelection.aspx

- Select the line of learning that your learner is likely to be progressing towards.

- Select the catalogue for the relevant Diploma level (eg Foundation, Higher, Progression or Advanced). When you click on this you will get a list of qualifications appropriate for that line of learning.

- At the bottom of that screen you will see a heading for additional and specialist learning. Select this and it will take you to the list of qualifications that can count as ASL for your chosen level. These include different qualification types such as GCSEs, QCF qualifications and vocationally related qualifications (VRQs).

- From this list refine your search further to select QCF qualifications.

- Find those that are appropriate within a Foundation Learning personalised learning programme, then select those that also appear on the Foundation Learning qualifications catalogue.

When selecting qualifications to support progression to a Foundation Diploma, you will want to consider some key points relating to ASL:

- Qualifications achieved as part of ASL must be at the level of the Diploma or above.

- Some qualifications in the ASL catalogue are suitable for post-16 learners only.

- Some qualifications are barred to prevent duplication and support maximum breadth of learning within the Diploma programme.

## Next steps: what do I need to consider when planning for implementation of the Foundation Learning programmes and Foundation Diplomas?

You may wish to consider the following suggestions:

- Identify qualifications that can be used as ASL in the Diploma lines available in your area that are appropriate for use in Foundation Learning programmes.

- Develop a Foundation Learning programme offer that allows learners to sample relevant learning (captured through QCF units/ qualifications) in the vocational areas covered by different Diploma lines before committing to a particular 14–19 Diploma.

- Build an entry level learning programme that would support progression onto a particular Diploma line of learning. Think about the role of ASL, functional skills, project-based learning, and personal, learning and thinking skills when planning this learning.

- Explore how you could begin to accredit your learners' achievement in these areas in ways that would support progression to the 14–19 Diplomas.

## Further information

Available on the LSC website (http://qfr.lsc.gov.uk/flt/support):

- *Foundation Learning Tier: interim guidance* (May 2009)

- *Foundation Learning Tier: 14–19 delivery guidance for 2009/10* (August 2009)

Other resources include:

- QCDA Foundation Learning pages: www.qcda.gov.uk/8153.aspx

- QCDA Foundation Learning qualifications catalogue: www.qcda.gov.uk/20536.aspx

- additional and specialist learning guidance from QCDA: www.qcda.gov.uk/20927.aspx

- Diploma qualifications: www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/ DiplomaCatalogueSelection.aspx

- Foundation Learning support: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/ foundationlearning

- an overview of resources to support implementation, teaching and learning: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/ page.aspx?o=191622