14-19 **Workforce Support**

Foundation Learning Support

LSIS LEARNING AND SKILLS IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

Getting started with Foundation Learning

A resource for schools and other providers working with Key Stage 4 learners

Getting started with Foundation Learning

A resource for schools and other providers working with Key Stage 4 learners

All information in this booklet is correct as at November 2009

Further information

For further information about the issues discussed
in this publication:
Tel 020 7492 5262
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Contents

Introduction

Who will be interested in this resource?

This resource will help schools and other centres working with learners at Key Stage 4 who need to prepare to implement Foundation Learning programmes.

What is Foundation Learning and how will it work?

Foundation Learning is a new way to provide personalised learning programmes for young people working at entry level and level 1. It helps these learners to develop their potential and prepares them to progress towards level 2 and other routes.

Foundation Learning makes it easier for schools to design and deliver successful learning programmes and recognises the need for flexible accreditation and enhanced support for learners.

Foundation Learning is delivered in personalised learning programmes. A programme should include:

- subject or vocational knowledge, skills and understanding
- functional skills
- personal and social development.

A Foundation Learning programme will include initial engagement activities and a wrap-around of support, advice and guidance for the learner.

Figure 1. How Foundation Learning programmes support progression
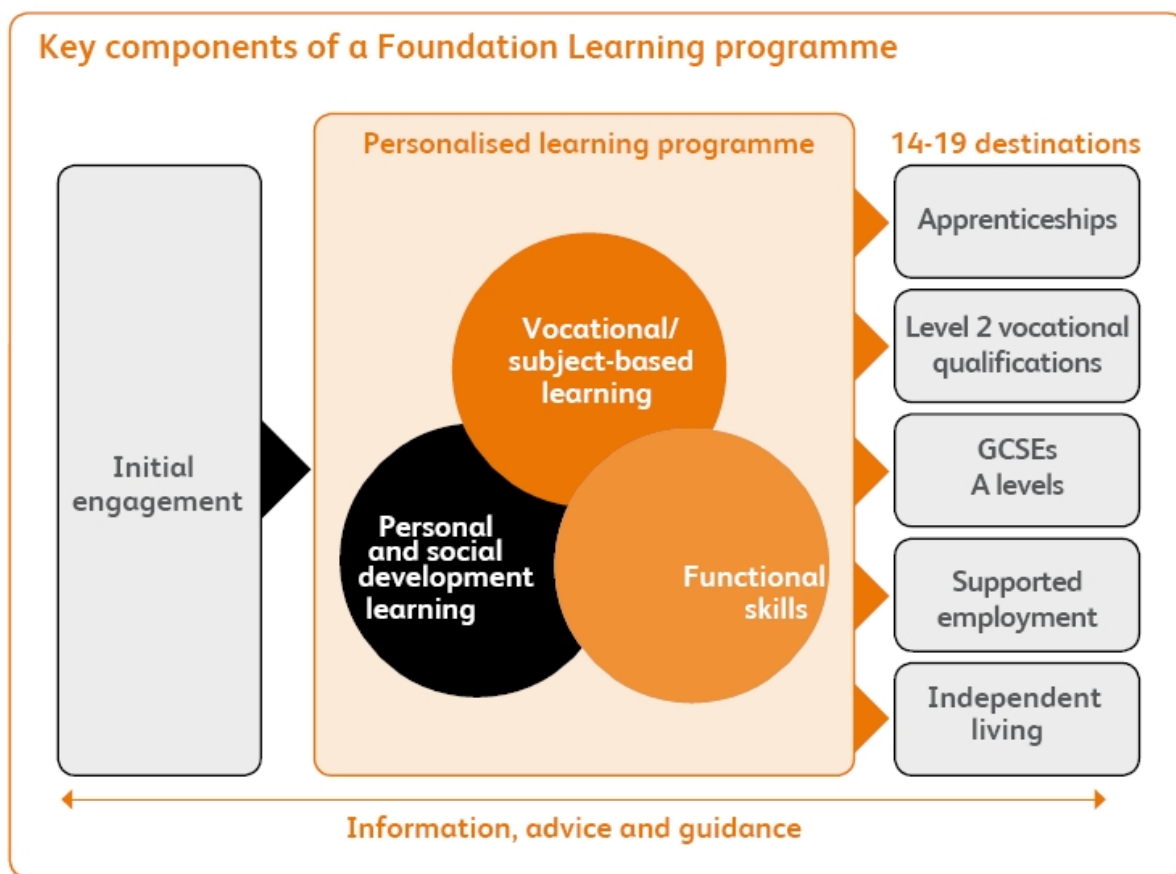
Key components of a Foundation Learning programme

Personalised learning programme

14-19 destinations

Initial engagement

Vocational/ subject-based learning

Personal and social development learning

Functional skills

Apprenticeships

Level 2 vocational qualifications

GCSEs A levels

Supported employment

Independent living

Information, advice and guidance

Schools will design programmes for their learners using mainly entry level and level 1 functional skills and Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) qualifications.[1] The wide range of qualifications available for Foundation Learning provides flexibility and gives learners more options. Qualifications are available to accredit vocational learning, personal and social learning and combinations of both.

Who are Foundation Learning programmes for?

The programmes are for a wide range of learners, including those:

- in mainstream education working at entry level and level 1
- who might previously have been on Key Stage 4 engagement programmes
- with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- in alternative provision such as pupil referral units.

Programmes will also be available to learners in further education (FE) who might previously have been on Entry to Employment (E2E), entry level or level 1 vocational programmes or provision for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities.

How can schools and providers use this resource?

2
The National Curriculum for England at Key Stages 3 and 4 was first published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) in 2007 and came into force in schools in September 2008. See http://curriculum.qcda. gov.uk/index.aspx

This resource has been designed to support schools and other providers working at Key Stage 4 in preparing to implement their first Foundation Learning programmes. It complements the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency's (QCDA's) guidance on the secondary curriculum[2] and offers schools a real opportunity to innovate, building on existing good practice.

It can be used in a variety of ways to:

- review existing arrangements for Foundation Learning
- support understanding of the issues which schools face in improving progression
- plan essential staff development
- inform an organisational implementation plan.

3
Foundation Learning Tier: 14-19 delivery guidance for 2009/10, LSC/ QCDA, August 2009, http://readingroom. lsc.gov.uk/lsc/ National/provider_ delivery_guidance_ august_2009_ final_version.pdf

This resource begins by identifying the ways in which Foundation Learning will build on existing practice, followed by sections which focus on different aspects of improving progression:

- destination-led planning
- building coherent programmes
- flexible recognition of achievement
- collaboration and planning.

You will find this resource packed with ideas that will help you to get started on the journey towards implementing Foundation Learning. It includes things to think about as you work through each section and actions you might consider taking. Each section also includes reflective self-check prompts and a short staff development activity. These will help you to work with colleagues to consider how the big ideas that underpin Foundation Learning can build on your existing practice. There are more staff development activities available on the LSIS Excellence Gateway website (www.excellencegateway.org.uk/foundationlearning).

Section 5 of the resource includes examples of Foundation Learning programmes. Further examples are available in the Foundation Learning delivery guidance.[3]

Building on existing practice

The development of Foundation Learning has
been informed by effective practice through:

- the increased flexibility programme
- the Key Stage 4 engagement programme
- E2E
- the work of special schools.

Foundation Learning provides opportunities to build on
the new thematic approaches to learning at Key Stage 3
and the work that has been done to increase collaboration
amongst providers. It builds on the work done
to promote inclusion and opens up new opportunities for
learners working at the lowest levels to gain nationally
recognised qualifications through entry level 1.

Schools of all types will find that many of the characteristics of
effective Foundation Learning are recognisable features of their
existing provision. At the same time, many schools are looking
for new ways to improve progression and ensure that learners
remain in education and training. The introduction of more flexible
functional skills and QCF qualifications provides opportunities
for learners to gain accreditation through bite-sized units.

Foundation Learning brings together into a coherent and
flexible package, for the first time, the flexibilities provided
by these new qualifications with the effective practice that
has evolved in schools. It will help schools prepare for the
raising of the participation age and provide opportunities to
develop engaging and sustainable learning experiences.

1 Destination-led planning

This section covers:

- destination-led planning
- identifying learner needs
- principles for defining progression destinations.

Things to think about as you work through this section

- How could we improve the way we plan programmes for learners working at entry level and level 1?
- How well do our learners currently progress?

Destination-led planning

The introduction of Foundation Learning places a greater emphasis on planning learning programmes with a progression destination in mind. Information, advice and guidance (IAG) will support the learner's involvement in this process.

It is essential to have a clear idea of where a learner is heading, if a programme is to help them to progress. This clarity enables a school to design a programme of learning which can provide the learner with the skills that they need to move from their starting point to a defined destination. It also allows schools to review their provision, to determine whether the personalised learning programme is properly supporting the learner to achieve their goal, asking questions such as:

- Will the support package that we are offering this learner help them to engage in and enjoy learning?

- Will the skills and knowledge that we are developing enable this learner to access and sustain a place in post-16 learning?

- Will our approach ensure that learners avoid unnecessary repetition of learning?

Schools will need to work with the learner and those supporting them to establish an anticipated progression destination. It will be important to ensure that the destination is realistic and achievable, and reflects the learner's aspirations. It is likely that the destination will become more specifically defined as the learner moves through their programme. Destinations will include Apprenticeships, skilled work, GCSEs, level 2 vocational qualifications and, for some learners, further Foundation Learning post-16.

Considering the relevance of the destination can become an integral part of the review progress. Learners should be encouraged to assess their progress towards their destination. They can identify what skills they have gained, how these skills will help them move towards their goal and where further learning is required. Stating the destination within the individual learning plan will help to ensure that it remains central to the learner's programme and that progress towards it is properly tracked.

Identifying learner needs

It is important to adopt personalised planning approaches to establish where a learner might want to progress. This will mean giving the learner opportunities to:

- tell others about themselves
- show what they can do
- make choices and express preferences about what they want to do or be
- express hopes and aspirations for the future.

It will also mean working with:

- the learner to build up a rounded picture of them as a person
- any other individuals involved with the learner (for example special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) or mentors) to understand any related needs
- a range of people significant to the learner to get a wider perspective and to benefit from their knowledge and understanding of the learner.

For many learners it will be important to spend time discovering information that will be relevant to their journey towards progression, for example:

- the course they want to move on to or the sort of employment they would prefer
- what abilities, interests, values, assumptions and experiences they have in relation to learning and work
- their work and learning-related likes and dislikes, strengths, interests and aspirations
- what their key learning needs are
- how learning programmes should be tailored to give them the maximum chance of progressing to the destination they want.

This information helps to establish the kind of courses and workplaces that might be appropriate for the learner and can be included in their individual learning plan. When it is done well, this process can also have secondary effects whereby learners:

- gain an increased understanding of the range of courses and vocational opportunities available to them

- overcome negative preconceptions about learning or some types of courses

- benefit from raised aspirations in relation to employment.

Once the school has established a clear understanding of the learner's interests, aspirations and capacity to learn, a 'progression destination' can be identified. This will define an end point for this phase of the personalised learning programme and, on this basis, short, medium and long-term goals can be set to help learners work towards their planned destination.

Principles for defining progression destinations

The destination should be:

- in line with the learner's own aspirations, as identified through initial assessment

- clearly understood by all involved, including learners, parents and carers, tutors and teachers, support staff and others

- challenging, so that the learner is encouraged to aim high

- achievable, with the right support

- positively framed, so that it is motivating for the learner and others

- specific enough that objective decisions can be made as to when or if it has been met

- capable of revision as the learner moves through the programme, to ensure that it remains challenging, achievable and relevant.

self check

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the circle for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

A I know that this is in place in my organisation

B I know that this is not in place in my organisation

C I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
We have identified local progression destinations and we understand the entry criteria	◯	◯	◯
We have decided which learners we will target for Foundation Learning	◯	◯	◯
We have decided how we will help learners to identify a progression destination	◯	◯	◯
We have agreed how we will communicate information on learners' needs to our delivery partners	◯	◯	◯

After completing this section, you might run the following short development activity with colleagues

Developing a progression strategy

This activity is designed to help a group of operational managers involved in planning for Foundation Learning. It will inform a progression strategy owned by the partners. You may find this helpful if you undertake it with the other partners with whom you have delivered Key Stage 4 engagement programmes.

1 As a team, agree the purposes and principles for the strategy, for example:

- Learners take part in engagement activities at Key Stage 4 so that they can progress to a meaningful destination in Year 12.
- Every learner will have a personalised programme leading to a specific destination that is relevant to them.
- The key objective for everyone involved with the learners is to engage them in learning and help them to progress to their planned destination.

2 Work with partners to develop a set of descriptors setting out what good practice should look like and how it promotes progression. You might like to use the characteristics of effective delivery contained within *Foundation Learning Tier: 14-19 delivery guidance for 2009/10*, pp11-13.[4]

3 Consider your current practice in relation to the practice that you have described in step 2 above.

4 Determine what you will need to do in order to move from your current position to the state you have described in step 2. This is the basis of your progression strategy.

4
LSC/QCDA, August 2009
http://readingroom. lsc.gov.uk/lsc/ National/provider_ delivery_guidance_ august_2009_ final_version.pdf

2 Building coherent programmes

This section covers:

- Foundation Learning in the school curriculum
- the wrap-around of support, advice and guidance
- personalised programmes.

Things to think about as you work through this section

- How could Foundation Learning build on our current curriculum offer?
- How could we take advantage of opportunities to personalise each learner's experience?

The implementation of Foundation Learning places a greater emphasis on considering the learner's whole learning experience and how the personalised programme will support engagement, achievement and progression.

Foundation Learning in the school curriculum

Foundation Learning will sit within the Key Stage 4 curriculum offer alongside GCSEs and level 2 vocational qualifications (See Figure 2).

Figure 2. Foundation Learning in the wider school curriculum alongside level 2 vocational qualifications and GCSEs

Pathway 1	English		ICT	Science	Options			PE	RE	Citizenship	PSHE
Pathway 2	English		ICT	Science	Level 2 vocational learning			PE	RE	Citizenship	PSHE
Pathway 3	Functional Skills			Science	Vocational/subject-based learning at Entry or Level 1			Personal and social development			

Foundation Learning will enable curriculum planners to use pathways-based timetabling and other approaches to ensure that learners are offered a curriculum that meets their needs. Schools can also develop a curriculum offer that allows learners to combine options from different pathways, e.g. taking some GCSEs and some Foundation Learning qualifications.

Schools and their partners can make a smooth transition to Foundation Learning from existing programmes that might involve the use of specialist facilities, such as Key Stage 4 engagement programmes (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. How Key Stage 4 engagement programmes will make a transition to Foundation Learning

Key Stage 4 engagement programmes

Essential English, mathematics and ICT	Two days of work-focused learning	Personal development

Foundation Learning

Functional skills	Vocational/ subject learning	Personal and social development

Foundation Learning is particularly appropriate for learners who:

- would benefit from a more individual programme

- are unsure about their vocational preference or want to experience learning in more than one vocational area

- have a spiky profile[5] and are working at entry level and level 1 in different areas

- would benefit from the accumulation of accreditation step-by-step through unit-based qualifications.

5
The term 'spiky profile' is used to describe pupils who are judged to be working at a particular level, but have arrived there with different patterns of strengths and weaknesses and may therefore need different support in order to make progress. This is often seen when a learner may be capable of working successfully at level 1 for their vocational learning but may require support to work at entry level 3 in one or more of the functional skills areas.

The wrap-around of support, advice and guidance

Successful Foundation Learning programmes are based on a wrap-around of support, advice and guidance for learners. Support should be based on the learner's needs and might include:

- initial assessment of learning and support needs
- an ongoing process of progress reviews and planning
- work with a SENCO
- mentoring
- advice and guidance.

Schools will consider each stage of the learner's experience or journey as they strengthen their existing arrangements for supporting learners.

Personalised programmes

One of the essential features of Foundation Learning is that learners should have access to a personalised programme of learning and support that will enable them to progress from their starting point through their journey to their planned destination.

Some schools have expressed concerns about managing these personalised programmes when learners are taught in groups and share one set of resources, facilities and staff. Learners typically have very diverse needs, making it essential for schools to find solutions to this apparent complexity.

The example on page 12 illustrates how an off-site experience can be used as a context for different learners to work towards different targets and potentially towards gaining different QCF units or qualifications. The activity has been chosen because it is typical within Key Stage 4 engagement programmes. It is also the sort of experience that can sometimes become routine and not exploited as effectively or creatively as it could be.

Learning in a construction workshop

Learners spend one day per week at a local training provider. Learning takes place in a large, open-plan construction workshop. The provider tends to organise the session so that groups of learners are involved in different practical tasks. Tasks include brickwork, woodworking skills, tiling and preparing construction materials for reuse in the centre.

The learners usually engage well in the tasks, as they have an interest in construction and the tasks are all relevant in helping the learners to develop an understanding of the industry and the trades they would like to train in. Each learner has different priorities for participating in the session and these are based on the short-term targets agreed between the learner and their personal tutor. Staff members support learners in developing skills and generating evidence for the QCF qualifications they are working towards.

Although they are all working towards the same qualification, three pairs of learners are working towards different units.

Jamie and Murali are involved in a construction task. For the next few weeks the key focus for them is on working in groups. Murali is learning about agreeing roles with other learners in the group. He is collecting evidence of this using photographs and the plan they have produced. Jamie is focused on asking for or offering help when it is required. He will collect short video clips showing how he helped other learners in the group to complete the task.

Mia and Mo are finding out about job roles in construction and the skills and qualities they will need to develop to gain an Apprenticeship place. They are using the internet to research the entry criteria for local Apprenticeship programmes. They are mid-way through a project describing the skills that are used in different construction trades. They are using their English and information and communication technologies (ICT) skills to present their project as a website.

Keema and Chip are working on an enterprise activity. They have designed a wooden clothes hook and are manufacturing 15 copies for a charity fund-raising event in school. They hope to sell the clothes hooks and have calculated how much the materials and labour would cost and what the sale price would need to be to make a profit.

self check

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the circle for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

A I know that this is in place in my organisation
B I know that this is not in place in my organisation
C I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
We have agreed how we will fit Foundation Learning into the school curriculum	◯	◯	◯
We have agreed how we will offer a supportive wrap-around to learners	◯	◯	◯
We understand which learners will benefit most from Foundation Learning	◯	◯	◯
We are using learner needs to agree personal targets and to personalise their learning experience	◯	◯	◯

After completing this section, you might run the following short development activity with colleagues

Practical personalisation

This activity is designed to help curriculum planning and delivery staff to:
- reflect on the existing curriculum for learners working at entry and level 1 at Key Stage 4
- think about how it might need improving or extending
- consider how a curriculum can be designed to provide maximum opportunities for individuals to develop the skills and knowledge that are relevant to them in their journey towards a planned destination.

1 Read through the example on page 12. Discuss how effectively you use your curriculum as a context for learners to develop relevant skills and knowledge.

2 Select an aspect of your existing Key Stage 4 engagement programme that is offered to the majority of learners (for example vocational learning or work placements). Identify the sorts of targets (for example, describe a work task using step-by-step instructions or use word-processing software to produce an instruction sheet) and skills (for example interpersonal skills or measuring skills) that this experience could be used to develop.

3 Plan what you need to do with your existing vocational learning to ensure that it offers opportunities to support the development of personal skills and functional skills in English, mathematics and ICT.

4 You may wish to look at the units that are available to accredit personal and social skills within qualifications, such as National Open College Network (NOCN) Skills Towards Enabling Progression (Step-Up), Edexcel Workskills or City & Guilds Personal Development and Employability.

3 Flexible recognition of achievement

This section covers:

- QCF qualifications
- functional skills qualifications
- other qualifications
- the Foundation Learning Qualifications Catalogue
- selecting qualifications.

Things to think about as you work through this section

- How could a more flexible qualifications offer support our learners?
- Would our learners benefit from a step-by-step approach to accrediting English, mathematics and ICT?

QCF qualifications

The introduction of Foundation Learning provides new opportunities to accredit learning.

The new QCF enables learners to gain qualifications at their own pace along flexible routes. Qualifications are available from entry level 1 up to level 8 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. The size and challenge of the QCF

| Award	Certificate	Diploma	
8	8	8	
7	7	7	
6	6	6	
5	5	5	
4	4	4	
3	3	3	
2	2	2	
1	1	1	**Foundation Learning**
Entry 1, 2, 3	Entry 1, 2, 3	Entry 1, 2, 3	
1-12 credits	13-36 credits	37 credits and above	

Challenge

Size

Qualifications are made up of units. Every unit and qualification in the framework has a credit value, with one credit representing approximately 10 hours of learning time, and a level between entry level and level 8 indicating how difficult it is. Units come in a variety of sizes, some are small (worth one credit) and others are large (worth four credits).

Awarding organisations design qualifications that make use of these units. Qualifications are available in small, medium and large packages. The title of the qualification (Award, Certificate or Diploma) indicates its size and degree of difficulty (see Figure 5). The design of the qualification determines its flexibility.

Figure 5. The titles and credit value of qualifications[6]
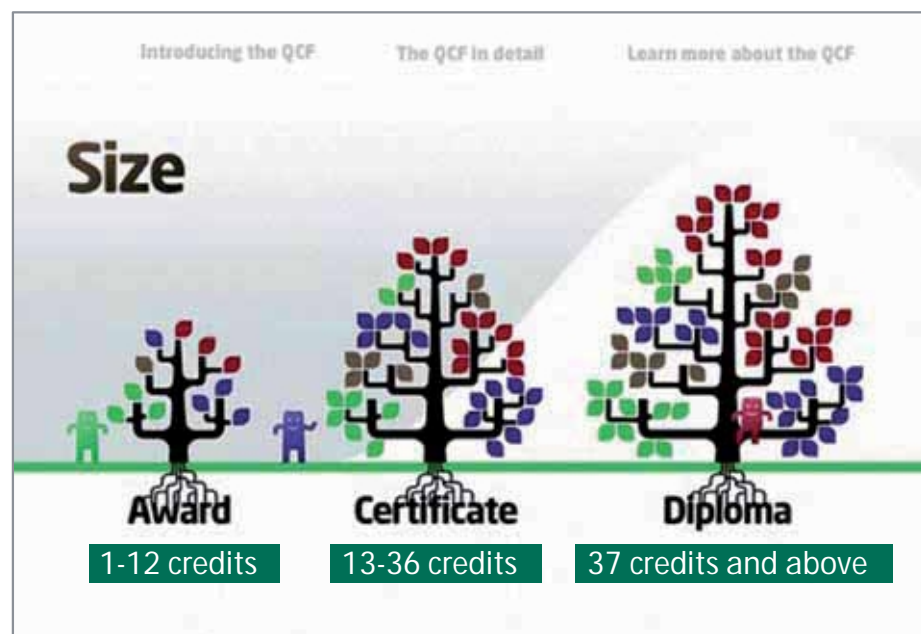
Some qualifications offer many units; schools can select the units that are appropriate to their learners' needs. For example, the NOCN Entry Level Certificate in Skills Towards Enabling Progression (Step-Up) (Entry 3) is based on a database of over 100 units. Typically this qualification might involve completing 10 units to give 21 credits.

Some qualifications allow you to choose only the units you need from a wide range of units (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Example of how a learner chooses from a range of units[7]

Some qualifications allow learners to gain a small Award and later to add additional units and turn it into a larger Certificate. For example, the City & Guilds Level 1 Award in Employability and Personal Development is also available as a larger Certificate. A learner who has achieved the Award could add further credits to achieve the Certificate.

Other qualifications allow units at different levels to be combined in the same qualification. For example, up to nine credits can be carried forward from units from ABC Level 1 Certificate in Retail Skills to an ABC Level 2 Certificate in Retail Skills.

All qualifications are nationally recognised in their own right and learners will work towards whole qualifications.

Functional skills qualifications

Functional skills qualifications are available from entry level 1 up to level 2 (see Figure 7). They provide a 'ladder' that allows learners to accredit the skills and knowledge they gain. Some schools are already using functional skills to progress learners through two or more levels during Key Stage 4.

Figure 7. How functional skills allow learners to gain accreditation step-by-step
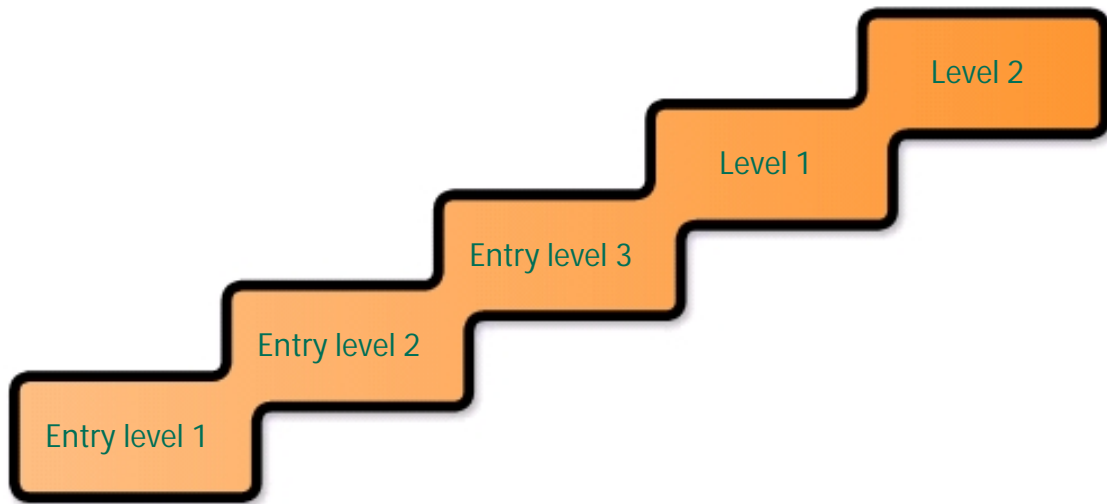
Functional skills also provide a shared currency for accrediting English, mathematics and ICT that will be shared between schools and the FE system. This will support progression. For example, a learner who achieves a level 1 functional skill at school will begin working towards level 2 when they enter the FE system. This is a significant advantage compared with current arrangements, where many learners who achieve a low-grade GCSE (equivalent to level 1) undertake an initial assessment process when entering post-16 learning and often then begin working towards further learning at the same level, through level 1 Key Skills or level 1 Adult Basic Skills qualifications.

Initial assessment is an important process and will continue to be used to plan the support that a learner will need in order to make progress to the next functional skills level.

Other qualifications

Foundation Learning may be taken alongside GCSEs or other qualifications that support progression.

The Foundation Learning Qualifications Catalogue

QCDA has developed a Qualifications Catalogue to support the implementation of Foundation Learning. The catalogue:

- shows you which qualifications can be part of a Foundation Learning programme, including key information such as credits and levels

- helps you structure a learning programme using the three Foundation Learning components - functional skills, vocational and subject learning, and personal and social development

- is regularly updated as new qualifications are accredited.

The catalogue can be found at www.qcda.gov.uk/resources

Selecting qualifications

Where schools carefully select QCF qualifications that have the flexibility to recognise achievements relevant to their learners, it is possible to meet learner needs and support progression through a personalised learning programme.

Schools should aim to plan a curriculum based on the learners' needs and then identify qualification(s) which will allow them to recognise relevant achievements.

Schools may find the process described below helpful in integrating QCF qualifications into their first programmes:

1 Identify the knowledge, skills and understanding that you are aiming to develop for your learners.

2 Consider the range of levels at which your learners are working (for example entry 2, entry 3 or level 1).

3 Plan a curriculum that will engage learners. Provide opportunities to develop the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding.

4 Explore possible qualifications using the Foundation Learning Qualifications Catalogue and by using the link within it to the Register of Regulated Qualifications, where you can view individual units within qualifications.

5 Select the qualification(s) which best match your learners' needs.

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the circle for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

A I know that this is in place in my organisation

B I know that this is not in place in my organisation

C I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
We have reviewed the Foundation Learning Qualifications Catalogue and explored the qualifications and the units available within them	◯	◯	◯
We have agreed how we will provide access to entry level and level 1 functional skills accreditation to learners	◯	◯	◯
We have identified appropriate QCF qualifications and registered with the awarding organisation	◯	◯	◯
Our partners have agreed which QCF qualifications they will offer our learners	◯	◯	◯

After completing this section, you might run the following short development activity with colleagues

Exploring the Foundation Learning Qualifications Catalogue

Look at the range of new qualifications that are available. This is a crucial first step in preparing for Foundation Learning. Here is a series of suggestions for staff development.

1 Explore the Foundation Learning Qualifications Catalogue to see what external accreditation might be suitable for your learners.

2 Look in detail at particular qualifications using the links to the Register of Regulated Qualifications. Click on the hyperlink within the Foundation Learning Qualifications Catalogue to get to the database. Is the qualification flexible? Does it allow you to choose the units that are appropriate for your learners? Is the qualification available in different sizes (Award, Certificate or Diploma)? What are the learning outcomes for the qualifications you are interested in?

3 List the knowledge, skills and understanding that you are trying to help your learners achieve and find a 'best fit' qualification from the catalogue.

4 Create your own criteria for selecting qualifications (for example 'needs to allow learners to sample different vocational areas', 'must have assessment on demand' or 'must be flexible in the way we can select units').

5 Use the exercise to begin to design your Foundation Learning offer. Remember to include functional skills.

4 Collaboration and planning

This section covers:

- working with partners
- planning.

Things to think about as you work through this section

- How could we work with our partners to implement Foundation Learning?

- How could we revise our current plans to reflect the need to prepare for Foundation Learning?

The introduction of Foundation Learning programmes will build on and strengthen existing collaborative arrangements.

Working with partners

Achieving positive progression for learners will almost always involve working with partners. With the curriculum being driven by the skills needed to progress on to a particular destination (rather than by the demands of qualifications), it is essential that providers communicate with the organisations to which the learners are hoping to progress, for example colleges and other education or training providers. Many schools will be involved in existing partnerships as a result of increased flexibility or engagement programmes. Building on existing partnerships and working together to introduce an enhanced support offer and more flexible qualifications will enable schools to ensure the relevance of their curriculum offer.

Developing progression partnerships with a local FE College or work-based learning provider is very important. Understanding their offer will help you to enable learners to begin to accumulate units at school that can count towards the Apprenticeship or level 2 qualifications to which they want to progress.

Establishing strong relationships with employers can also result in learners having the opportunity to explore and develop an understanding of the workplace, providing a valuable stepping stone towards readiness for employment. Learners can find out more about learning in the workplace and undertake a work placement with a potential employer. Many QCF qualifications provide opportunities to accredit both the preparation that pupils undertake prior to work experience and the learning that takes place with employers while on work placement.

Schools will wish to work with other partners to strengthen their offer. Partnerships with parents and carers can be especially important for learners at risk of becoming disengaged, as can working with other agencies involved with the learner, such as the youth service and voluntary sector organisations.

Schools should consider the term 'partner' in its widest sense, and at each stage of the learner's experience, identify who is - or should be - their partner(s) in supporting the learner to progress.

Planning

You may find it helpful to revisit your 14-19 development plans to raise the profile of, and preparations for, Foundation Learning. This will help you to:

- clarify the specific requirements of Foundation Learning
- assess where you are now and what you need to target next to ensure the delivery of high-quality and appropriate provision
- build capacity for, and prepare for, implementing Foundation Learning.

You can find examples of the ways in which schools have developed Foundation Learning implementation plans on the Excellence Gateway. See www.excellencegateway.org.uk/foundationlearning

self check

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the circle for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

A I know that this is in place in my organisation

B I know that this is not in place in my organisation

C I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.
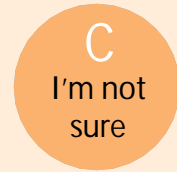
	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure
A senior manager has responsibility for preparing to implement Foundation Learning	◯	◯	◯
We are involved in professional development activities to build the skills and knowledge required to implement Foundation Learning	◯	◯	◯
We have reviewed and supplemented our school plans to incorporate preparations for Foundation Learning	◯	◯	◯

After completing this section, you might run the following short development activity with colleagues

Building on existing collaborative arrangements

This activity is designed to help managers and Key Stage 4 coordinators to reflect on the adequacy of existing partnerships and to consider how they might be further developed.

1 Work as a team to list all your existing partners in relation to your provision for learners Working predominately at entry and level 1. You may find you want to agree on a definition of the term 'partner' in order to complete a comprehensive list. For example, the definition might be 'any people or organisations we work with in order to provide for, motivate and support our learners'.

2 Review each of these partnership arrangements to determine whether you are exploiting it to the full:

- Is there more you could ask for or offer?
- Are protocols, working arrangements, service level agreements, data-sharing or other partnership arrangements properly agreed?
- Do these arrangements support progression or could they be updated or refreshed?
- Are there other ways in which you could improve existing partnerships?

3 Consider what new partnerships you might need to establish if you are going to achieve a positive progression for each of your learners and reduce the risk of learners becoming not in employment, education or training (NEET).

4 Draw up an action plan that will enable you to improve existing partnerships and forge new ones where necessary.

5 Example programmes

Foundation Learning offers schools an opportunity to innovate, building on existing good practice. The examples below provide an indication of how Foundation Learning programmes can be designed to support learners with a range of needs and can enable them to progress with nationally recognised accreditation.

Kieran
Working at entry level and level 1 in a mainstream school

Kieran is in Year 10 in a mainstream school. He enjoys school and is fully engaged in the school community. He works predominantly at entry level, but in some areas he works at level 1.

Initial assessment

An initial assessment identified that Kieran's needs were unlikely to be met by a GCSE-based programme at Key Stage 4. He is keen to learn more about the vocational areas that might be open to him when he moves into FE. Gaining accreditation for his English, mathematics and ICT skills will help him to progress to the most appropriate course when he leaves school.

Progression aim

Kieran expects to progress to a level 1 vocational programme and to further functional skills learning at college.

Delivery

Kieran is on a programme known locally as the Work and Enterprise Programme; its design is based on Foundation Learning. He is working towards QCF and functional skills qualifications in school. He spends one day each week with an off-site learning provider. The local consortium has set up a carousel that allows Kieran and his peers to taste a different vocational area each term; in Year 10 he will taste construction skills, horticulture and the sports industry. He gains QCF units for each of the vocational areas. He is also learning general employability skills and personal development in school. Much of this learning is undertaken through thematic projects that have been designed by the school. He is currently working on a 12-week project to plan a Christmas fair and manufacture products to be sold at the event. His learning on and off site is accredited within the NOCN 'Skills Towards Enabling Progression' qualification.

The school has also introduced a personal and social development qualification across Key Stage 4, as a way of accrediting some of the work undertaken through the personal, social and health education curriculum. Kieran is working with his peers towards this qualification.

The mathematics, English and ICT teams in school are helping him to develop and practise his functional skills. He expects to sit all three functional skills at entry level 2 this year and in mathematics and ICT at entry level 3 next year. Kieran's tutor expects that by the end of Year 11 he may achieve the level 1 NOCN Diploma in 'Skills Towards Enabling Progression' if he continues to make progress at the current rate. He will also sit GCSEs in science and art; his teachers expect him to achieve a lower grade of D-F.

By the end of Year 11 Kieran will complete the following qualifications:

- NOCN Entry level 3 Certificate in Skills Towards Enabling Progression (Year 10)
- NOCN Level 1 Diploma in Skills Towards Enabling Progression (Year 11)
- ASDAN Level 1 Certificate in Personal and Social Development
- Functional Skills Entry 2 Mathematics
- Functional Skills Entry 2 English
- Functional Skills Entry 2 ICT
- Functional Skills Entry 3 Mathematics
- Functional Skills Entry 3 ICT

Kav
A disengaged 16-year-old working at level 1 in a mainstream school

Kav is in Year 11 in a mainstream school. He struggled to maintain his motivation in Year 9 and then he was identified as being at risk of disengagement. He missed a significant amount of school in Year 10 through unauthorised absence.

The local consortium has recently revised its Key Stage 4 engagement programme offer to reflect Foundation Learning. Kav was originally working towards a full GCSE programme in Year 10; however, a review of his progress during the summer term suggested that the new Key Stage 4 engagement programme might meet his needs better. Kav's mother was involved in this review and agrees with the new programme.

Initial assessment

Kav's lack of motivation means that he has struggled to succeed in mathematics and English as he has missed so much of the programme of study in Year 10. He is passionate about music and has good IT skills in some areas. He can often demonstrate weak personal and social skills; he knows that at times he can come across as aggressive.

Progression aim

Kav would like to progress to a music technology programme or a Creative and Media Diploma at college, but his weak functional skills would currently make this difficult.

Delivery

The local consortium includes a specialist arts college and a community radio station. Kav joined a programme, known locally as the Vocational Training Programme; its design is based on Foundation Learning.

Kav will work towards level 1 functional skills in mathematics, ICT and English and GCSEs in PE and science while in school two days per week. He will spend two days per week at a specialist arts college, where he is working towards an Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in Workskills and a Level 1 BTEC Certificate in Performing Arts. He is also getting to know some of the staff in the music technology department, as he is working on a group project to produce a dance music CD and a performance for the local festival. He has recently had his first review of a concert published in the college's music magazine.

Kav spends one day a week at the community radio station; the main purpose of this placement is to develop his personal and social skills. This will also help him to develop some customer service and event planning skills.

Kav is working towards the following qualifications:

- Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in Workskills
- Level 1 BTEC Certificate in Performing Arts
- Functional Skills Level 1 Mathematics
- Functional Skills Level 1 English
- Functional Skills Level 1 ICT
- GCSE Science - anticipated grade E
- GCSE PE - anticipated grade F.

Vic

15-year-old learner with severe learning difficulties in a special school

Initial assessment

Vic has been a pupil at a special school since she was 5; she has a severe learning difficulty. She needs support to take part in the curriculum and has difficulties with coordination. Vic's Foundation Learning programme will focus on developing her self-help, independence and social skills.

Progression aim

Vic aims to progress to a programme at the local college that will help her to develop further personal autonomy and independent living skills.

Delivery

The school has recently introduced Foundation Learning. This has resulted in more opportunities for learners to gain nationally recognised qualifications. The team at Vic's school has also been in discussion with the local college and has identified some of the skills that will help her to make the transition to college in two years' time.

Some of Vic's learning is delivered in school - much as would have been the case in previous years. She has more opportunities to take advantage of local partnership arrangements and off-site learning. She is involved in a group project where she is learning more about her rights and responsibilities. She also takes part in an integration project which involves a group of pupils from her school working on a joint project, with a small group of pupils from a local mainstream school. The project is organised through the local consortium and involves a local horticulture training provider.

Vic is currently working towards the following qualifications:

- City & Guilds Entry level 2 Certificate in Personal Development and Employability
- Functional Skills Entry 1 English
- Functional Skills Entry 2 ICT.

Staff believe that it would be inappropriate for Vic to undertake a functional skill in mathematics at entry level 1; she will gain accreditation for numeracy skills through the Edexcel Entry Level Award in Mathematical Skills.

Further information

For further information, please visit the Foundation Learning page son the Excellence Gateway website at:
www.excellencegateway.org.uk/foundationlearning

This resource is complemented by a resource developed for local authority 14-19 managers.
Visit: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=257755

Appendix
Combined self-check prompts

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the circle for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

A **I know that this is in place in my organisation**
B **I know that this is not in place in my organisation**
C **I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.**

	A In place	B Not in place	C I'm not sure

Destination-led planning

	A	B	C
We have identified local progression destinations and we understand the entry criteria	○	○	○
We have decided which learners we will target for Foundation Learning	○	○	○
We have decided how we will help learners to identify a progression destination	○	○	○
We have agreed how we will communicate information on learners' needs to our delivery partners	○	○	○

Building coherent programmes

	A	B	C
We have agreed how we will fit Foundation Learning into the school curriculum	○	○	○
We have agreed how we will offer a supportive wrap-around to learners	○	○	○
We understand which learners will benefit most from Foundation Learning	○	○	○
We are using learner needs to agree personal targets and to personalise their learning experience	○	○	○

Appendix
Combined self-check prompts - continued

Read through the following checklist and for each point tick the circle for the statement that is most accurate in relation to your organisation:

A I know that this is in place in my organisation

B I know that this is not in place in my organisation

C I'm not sure if this is in place in my organisation.

	A In place	**B** Not in place	**C** I'm not sure
Flexible recognition of achievement			
We have reviewed the latest version of the Foundation Learning Qualifications Catalogue and explored the qualifications and the units available within them	○	○	○
We have agreed how we will provide access to entry level and level 1 functional skills accreditation to learners	○	○	○
We have identified appropriate QCF qualifications and registered with the awarding organisation(s)	○	○	○
Our partners have agreed which QCF qualifications they will offer our learners	○	○	○
Collaboration and planning			
A senior manager has responsibility for preparing to implement Foundation Learning	○	○	○
We are involved in professional development activities to build the skills and knowledge required to implement Foundation Learning	○	○	○
We have reviewed and supplemented our school plans to incorporate preparations for Foundation Learning	○	○	○

14–19 Workforce Support is delivered on behalf of LSIS by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, LSN, The Workshop and Pearson Education.

www.excellencegateway.org.uk/foundationlearning