

Offering college wide personalised programmes



Case Study

This case study is one of a series that provides examples of emerging practice as colleges begin to exploit the flexibilities of the QCF to develop, within current funding constraints, a curriculum more responsive to the needs of learners, employers and the local community.

The colleges featured in the case studies were selected through the LSIS QCF Support as QCF lead providers; all are committed to driving the effective implementation of QCF in their local area. It is important to note that the sector is still in the early stages of QCF implementation; some of the models are still at the planning stage, ready for implementation in 2011/12. The case studies aim to spark ideas and prompt debate; all include contact details so that, if a particular example interests you, you can get in touch with the provider to find out how the model is working out in practice.

By developing a college wide, flexible approach to programme design and introducing a range of innovative vocational tasters, Leicester College is able to offer personalised programmes that meet both learner needs and financial objectives.

Career Learning Bugs

The college has introduced a range of vocational tasters or 'Career Learning Bugs'. A bug is typically a QCF Award of 3 credits which supports progression planning by providing the opportunity for learners to experience different aspects

of a vocational area – in other words, the different 'legs' of the bug – and plan their future learning. Each 'leg' of the bug has a clear progression route leading from it. Through discussion with staff, learners can explore different curriculum areas and vocational options.

An example of a 'Career Learning Bug'

Trinity College London Bronze Art Award (30 hours funded 16–18 and 19+)



Career Learning Bugs have been developed in all curriculum areas for 2011/12.

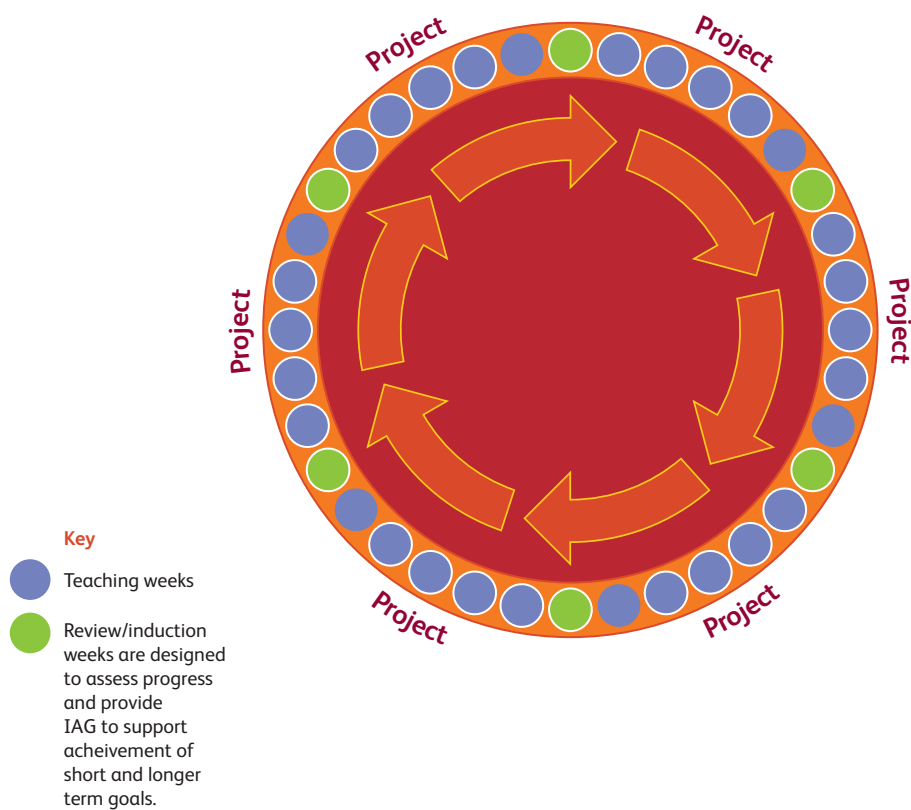
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Career Learning Bugs and Foundation Learning

The Career Learning Bugs have been used very successfully with Foundation Learning students. The Foundation Learning Carousel comprises repeated blocks of learning of 5 weeks, interspersed with regular review for existing learners or induction for new learners, enabling access to provision throughout the year. The learning blocks provide the Foundation Learning qualifications, functional skills, and access to the Career Learning Bugs. The programme is delivered through project based activity that maximises opportunities to study outside the classroom. All staff teaching on the block

contribute to the overarching project. A learner could have a programme of Foundation Learning qualifications delivered in six blocks of six weeks (five teaching weeks and one review week) and may in the course of this programme also elect to try any number of bugs. The programme also includes a learning mentor buddy system as part of the support, made available through the college's accredited Buddy Training programme. To enable progression to a higher level of study, a great deal of emphasis is also given to the development of functional skills.

Foundation Learning



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Meeting learner needs through personalised programmes

Using the flexibility of the QCF, learner programmes can now be tailored to meet learner needs. Programmes consist of a main qualification, small additional qualifications to meet particular needs and provide enrichment and any number of bugs! The additional qualifications are selected to support a learner's main programme by enhancing knowledge, filling skills gaps and aiding progression. There is also an expectation that they will be used to stretch the more able learners.

Programmes can be tailored to take account of prior achievement so that they are not required to re-learn things they already know and can do. For example, a learner enrolling on a Level 2 BTEC Diploma may have already achieved credits at school through a BTEC Extended Certificate. Through discussion with the learner, the college can put together a programme which extends and builds on their prior learning; for example, a programme could consist of a BTEC Diploma plus a small QCF Award, such as a WorkSkills Award, with the opportunity to explore a 'Career

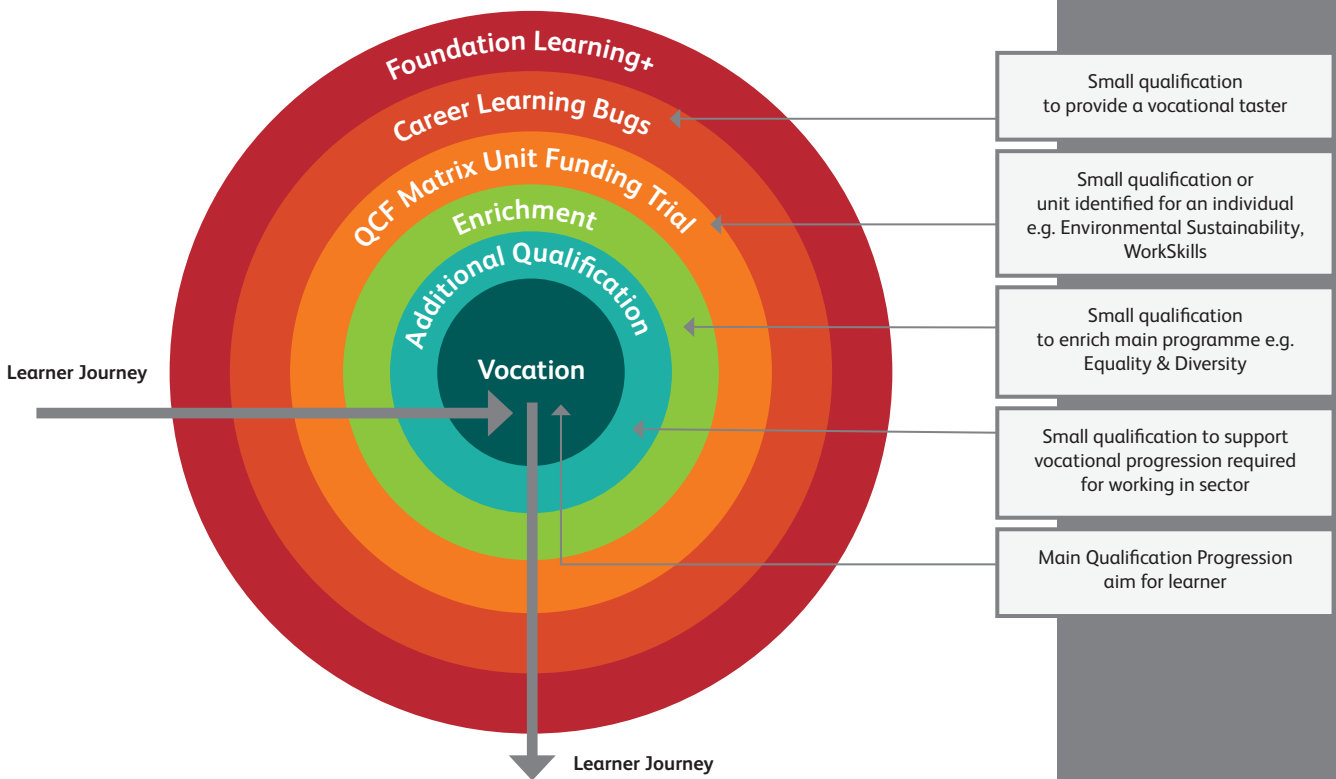
Learning Bug' and study additional options through the enrichment programme.

The additional qualifications and Career Learning Bugs are offered across the main college sites at various times to fit in with learners' timetable and are open to any college learner and 14-16 learners from local schools. By bringing together learners from different programmes, the model is financially viable.

The college has faced challenges in implementing this very flexible, personalised approach to delivery. Initially, some of the bugs failed to meet the objectives and these needed to be reworked. By working as team to resolve these issues, good models were shared and very quickly a template was produced for what might be perceived as 'best practice'.

There will be an evaluation of these developments at the end of the autumn term 2011 to identify their impact on learners as well as ways of moving forward.

Personalised Programmes



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Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)

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Qualifications and Credits Framework (QCF) Support (Sept 2010 – August 2011)

This sector led programme aimed to support managers and practitioners as they began to deliver the new qualifications from the QCF and use the distinctive features of the QCF to develop more flexible and responsive provision to meet the needs of learners and employers. Support was provided by regional QCF lead providers, with specific support for colleges, independent training providers and ACL/VCS providers.