

For:

➤ Exams office staff



**Qualifications
and Curriculum
Development
Agency**



**2010
Diploma
aggregation**

Successful Diploma awarding
A workbook for exams office staff

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**Qualifications and Curriculum
Development Agency**

53-55 Butts Road
Earlsdon Park
Coventry
CV1 3BH

Telephone 0300 303 3010
Enquiry line 0300 303 3011
Textphone 0300 303 3012
Fax 0300 303 3014
info@qcda.gov.uk
www.qcda.gov.uk

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Introduction

What is the purpose of this workbook?

This workbook is part of a wider campaign of support and information for exams office staff in centres where students have already begun a Diploma and are hoping to claim awards in summer 2010.

Its purpose is to assist you in completing the essential tasks that happen during the yearly cycle of Diploma administration (see the diagram below). As well as providing a comprehensive checklist of tasks that need to be completed, it offers practical advice on effective collaborative working with colleagues, to ensure you have the information you need to complete the tasks on time, so students can receive their Diploma award in summer 2010.



How do I use this workbook?

Over the coming months QCDA will be sending exams offices email alerts reminding them about administrative tasks that require attention and completion. This workbook groups these tasks into seven chapters, one for each stage of the Diploma administration process as in the diagram opposite, that run in chronological order through the academic year from 'Be prepared' to 'Summer holidays'.

Each chapter contains:

- advice and guidance on how to complete the required tasks
- links to more detailed information and guidance on Diploma administration
- a self-assessment checklist for centres to complete, which reviews whether existing processes are fit for purpose and notes any changes that need be made.

Completing the checklists

Each checklist features a list of essential tasks that need to be completed in that time period. Each task is broken down into actions that need to happen for the task to be completed successfully. You should rate how effective you think your current processes are by ticking one of the three columns.

If your processes reflect good practice tick the column headed



If you have processes in place but they need revising tick the column headed



If you do not have a suitable process to manage this task tick the column headed



Record actions that are required to improve processes in the 'Actions to be taken' table that follows each checklist.

Developing effective processes for Diploma administration

All centres need robust and well documented processes in place to complete the many Diploma administrative tasks. While some tasks are straightforward and can be completed easily, others require working with colleagues across your consortium or even externally (eg. awarding bodies).

Good communication is critical to completing these tasks and it is important that steps are added to your processes to ensure that the necessary mechanisms are in place. Cultivating good working relationships will help ensure you get the information you need from colleagues when you need it, and that you provide a similar level of timely service to them.

Effective processes – questions to ask

- Has someone been appointed to oversee the Diploma administrative process from start to finish?
- Have I identified all the steps needed to complete the task?
- Have I identified the individuals responsible for each step?
- Have I communicated with those involved?
- Do they understand what they need to do?
- Have they agreed to do this in the timescales needed?
- Have I checked that the information I need will be available to me when I need it?
- Are there any risks associated with each step, for example, what could go wrong and what can I do to prevent this?

Reviewing Diploma administration processes

The self-assessment checklist is an excellent prompt for examining whether a process needs to be changed. If changes are required the communications challenge is that colleagues may be resistant to change, because they don't understand why change is necessary or the benefits it would deliver.

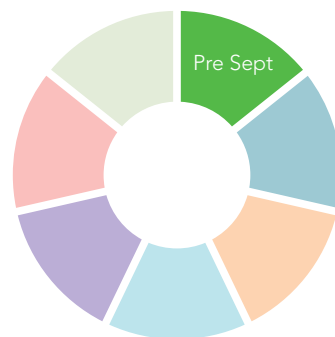
You are more likely to get support and cooperation if you take the time to explain to colleagues why change is needed and how the proposed changes affect their role in the process. Communication should be concise, to the point and focused on the positive benefits of what specific changes can achieve, rather than dwelling on past failings.

Since persuasion and negotiation will be critical to enlisting support, also make sure you allow time for people to make their views known and for you to engage with their contribution.

How can I access additional help and support if I need it?

If, after reading this workbook or receiving the *AutoAlert* emails you feel that you need to access additional help and support from QCDA that is not covered by the resources on our website, please contact your QCDA Customer Support Officer or call the QCDA Helpdesk.

Be prepared



What's required?

The following tasks should have been completed at the beginning of the 2009/2010 academic year, in particular:

- › signing the Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP) registration form, so you can receive unique learner numbers (ULNs)
- › signing the QCDA Head of Centre Agreement, to enable access to the Diploma aggregation service and management of learner accounts
- › ensuring a consortium exams policy is in place specifying who is responsible for the various aspects of Diploma delivery and assessment across your consortium.

How do you do it?

Home and assessment centres must make sure they've submitted MIAP registration forms and QCDA's Head of Centre Agreement, and have *Learner registration service* and *Diploma aggregation service* logins that work. If you haven't received your login, or can't access the *Learner registration service* or *Diploma aggregation service*, contact the relevant helpdesk.

Centres must agree on a consortium-wide exams administration policy. This will identify home and assessment centre roles and responsibilities and specify the component awarding bodies (CABs) and Diploma awarding bodies to be used for each individual component and overall Diploma award.

If your consortium hasn't already got this document, you must establish who would be responsible for this. It's likely to be a senior leader responsible for admin operations, or a local authority 14–19 coordinator. Making the relevant person aware of the guidelines in the *Leading successful diploma administration* document, or the *QCDA Consortium exam policy generator*, will provide them with a high-level framework for developing a policy itself.

Senior staff are frequently busy, and may not have recognised the implications of failing to complete an exams policy. So communicate these clearly to them, including what will happen if the consortium and its centres don't have this information.

Useful links

QCDA Exams policy generator

www.qcda.gov.uk/cepg

QCDA's exams officers good practice guide

<http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk/default.aspx>

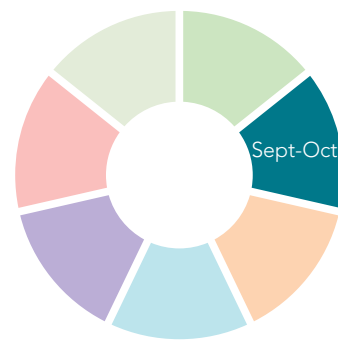
Diploma aggregation service reference guide for centres

www.qcda.gov.uk/25220.aspx

Nuts and bolts guide to leading successful Diploma administration

www.diploma-support.org

All about the student



What's required?

Valid student details, study plans and associated exam entries are critical to Diploma administration. This information is shared and used by key stakeholders across the awarding process and must be managed and communicated carefully to ensure each student receives the Diploma award that they deserve, on time. The following tasks should have been completed during September/October 2009:

- student unique learner numbers (ULNs) received and validated
- valid study plans developed and communicated to all relevant staff, both in your centre and across your consortium
- assessment entries made by the relevant centres across your consortium.

How do you do it?

ULNs should be used consistently in your own centre and across the consortium. They are available through the MIAP *Learner registration service*. It's the home centre's responsibility to make sure changes to student details are validated and communicated to relevant staff in your centre and across the consortium. Assessment centres need to make sure they receive ULNs and associated student details from home centres, and follow up missing or incorrect student details with the home centre as soon as these are identified.

Curriculum planners should use the *Diploma validator* during the autumn term of a Diploma student's first year, to check they are following a valid programme of study. If the check is done early enough, students who need to change can do so with minimal disruption.

Once a programme of study has been validated, a study plan can be developed for each student. This is essential for effective administration. QCDA's template for study plans can be partially completed automatically by importing a programme of study that's been validated and downloaded from the *Diploma validator*.

Every student in your centre must have a valid Diploma study plan. Follow up missing or invalid study plans immediately with teaching staff or line of learning leaders. You can work collaboratively, so the finished study plan can be shared with students, tutors or advisers, and others in your consortium.

A study plan should include key administration dates for all entry submissions, including principal learning (PL), project, functional skills, and additional and specialist learning (ASL). Some component awarding bodies offer greater flexibility, and so their functional skills and vocational qualifications (which can be used for ASL) can be taken on demand. Make sure everyone in your consortium understands these deadlines, and their responsibilities for any associated entries.

You must carry out any registrations for principal learning, project, functional skills and ASL, if required by the component awarding body. If you have students hoping to get their principal learning and project results for the January series, you should have submitted entries for these in October.

Establish clear lines of communication with your special educational needs department, and agree responsibility for each step in the access arrangements application process: who is responsible for gathering, recording and filing supporting evidence, liaising with teaching staff, submitting applications and setting the timescales for these actions? It's important that you work together to compile a complete list of the candidates who may need access arrangements, as this will help to ensure that you make all the necessary applications within the designated timescales.

Useful links

Learner registration service user guide and guide to data quality

www.miap.gov.uk

ASL guidance

www.qcda.gov.uk/20927.aspx

Awarding bodies offering Diploma or Diploma components

www.ofqual.gov.uk

Diploma catalogues

www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/DiplomaCatalogueSelection.aspx

QCDA's Diploma validator tool

<http://diplomavalidator.qcda.gov.uk>

Diploma validator user guide

http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk/libraryAssets/media/Diploma_validator_user_guide_final.pdf

Diploma learner study plan

<http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk/18133.aspx>

Key dates for Joint Council for Qualifications component awarding bodies

www.modernisationonline.com/compkeydates

Awarding body guidance on Diploma administration

www.edexcel.com/migrationdocuments/Diploma/7-DAB-guidance-Final.pdf

<http://store.aqa.org.uk/admin/library/AQA-DIPLOMA-ADMIN.PDF>

www.ocr.org.uk/download/admin/ocr_32911_admin_guide_diplomas.pdf

All about the student – self assessment checklist

Process evaluation	☆	?	▶
Is there a Diploma learner study plan, including entry codes and assessment dates, for each Diploma student?			
Who was responsible for developing study plans?			
Were study plans developed by a specific deadline?			
To whom and how were study plans communicated?			
Did study plans include all relevant components, including work experience and personal, learning and thinking skills?			
How were study plans validated?			
Were changes made to study plans after you received them, and how were these dealt with?			
How were changes to study plans communicated?			
What would happen if you discovered there were errors or discrepancies in a study plan?			
Do all students have valid unique learner numbers?			
Who was responsible for getting ULNs in your centre and across your consortium?			
How did you check students were happy for their details to be shared? For example, did they sign a fair processing notice?			
How did you store ULNs on your management information system?			
How do you pass student details to other centres in your consortium?			
How did you ensure that the information being passed to other centres in your consortium was correct?			
How did you know that the information passed was received correctly?			
What would you do if informed of changes to a student's details?			
Who else would need to be informed of the changes, and how would you keep these changes up to date?			

All about the student – self assessment checklist

Process evaluation



Do you have component awarding body administration key dates, particularly functional skills, principal learning, project and additional and specialist learning subjects?

Did you know where to get this information?

Who else needed to be informed of this information?

How did you communicate this information to others?

How did you check results would be available in time for the student to get their Diploma award when expected?

What would you do if you found out that results wouldn't be available in time for the student to get their Diploma?

Were students registered with component awarding bodies as required, using the student's ULN?

How did you know which qualifications to submit registrations for and by when?

Who was responsible for submitting registrations?

How would you know whether or not ASL qualifications were vocational or not?

How would you know if functional skills were 'on demand'?

What evidence do you have that you have registered principal learning correctly?

What evidence do you have that you registered ASL and functional skills correctly?

Were all entry requirements for January series met and unit entries made for the next exam series (if appropriate)?

How did you know which component awarding bodies to use?

How did you know which entries to make and their deadline for submission?

How did you know which centre was responsible for which entries?

How did you communicate entry procedures and administration deadlines to teaching and administrative staff?

What evidence do you have that teaching and administrative staff are aware of their responsibilities and deadlines in the entry process?

All about the student – self assessment checklist

Process evaluation



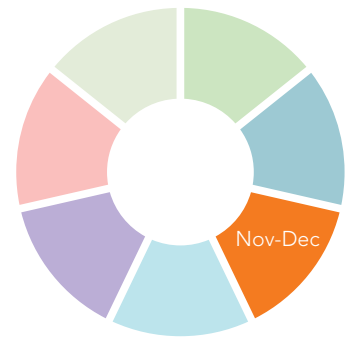
What evidence do you have that principal learning entries have been made?			
What evidence do you have that you used the correct ULN?			
What would you do if you discovered you'd left the ULN out, or entered the wrong one?			
Were deadlines for access arrangements for January 2010 series (except modified question papers) met?			
Who's responsible for the administration of access arrangements?			
What evidence do you have that involved staff are aware of their responsibilities and associated deadlines?			
What evidence do you have that you have met deadlines for submitting access arrangement requests?			
What would you do if an application was missed or details were entered incorrectly?			

Actions to be taken



Later this year, QCDA will launch a new version of the *Diploma aggregation service*. This will have an integrated validator, so you'll be able to check study plans and open a learner account in one step.

Health checks



What's required?

In November and December, you need to carry out a series of 'health checks' to ensure that:

- changes to study plans have been recorded, validated and communicated to all relevant staff within your centre and across your consortium
- component awarding bodies have enough time to moderate and post results for internally marked and on-demand assessments to support Diploma awarding dates
- there are arrangements in place for each student to gain work experience, and opportunities for them to demonstrate they have personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)
- Diploma awarding bodies have been identified and associated with your centre on the *Diploma aggregation service*
- you've opened learner accounts using the *Diploma aggregation service*, ready to receive component results
- plans exist for controlled internal assessments in each line of learning, to assure the quality of marking across your consortium
- you've identified which students have prior achievements that can contribute towards their Diploma, and checked these with the relevant component awarding bodies.

How do you do it?

Consult the person responsible for managing study plans in your consortium. Work with them to check if crucial steps have been missed or plans changed. Together, you can use the validator tool to confirm whether these changes have any impact on plan validity. You must communicate any problems immediately to curriculum and line of learning leads, so you can decide what to do next. Don't let your student continue with their studies if they're not going to lead to a Diploma. Validated changes must be communicated to all those affected, both within and across your consortia. You may also have to contact component awarding bodies if entries have been made, so make sure you have accurate ULNs, and qualification names or reference numbers to hand to explain the change to them.

Check awarding body assessment and moderation key dates, and make sure assessment and administrative staff are aware of these and their responsibilities, and are geared up to meet deadlines. This is particularly important for principal learning and project, where the majority of assessments are internal and the marks and assessment materials need to be submitted by certain dates. If you miss these deadlines, the component awarding body may not have time to moderate the work, and this could lead to delays in posting results on the *Diploma aggregation service*, and the student failing to achieve their Diploma in the summer.

Check that you have a process in place for recording work experience and PLTS (for example, using the QCDA form) and entering this information into learner accounts on the *Diploma aggregation service*, once you've received confirmation.

Use reports from the *Diploma aggregation service* to check learner accounts have been opened for all Diploma students, and that an intention to claim has been set for those intending to claim their award as soon as possible. You can also get information on which students have work experience and PLTS recorded (or missing), to help you with your administration.

Your domain assessor needs to make sure that effective internal standardisation takes place for each internally assessed unit within the Diploma, including principal learning and project. Make sure there's a process in place that identifies roles and responsibilities for assessing and confirming students' work for each unit that contributes to a Diploma. Staff involved in the delivery of the Diploma must understand the controlled conditions that need to be complied with when students produce their assessment evidence, and ensure that appropriate documentation is completed to record internal assessment and standardisation. Make sure your process includes regular feedback to assessment staff on their assessment of students' work.

Agree roles and responsibilities for identifying and submitting prior achievements. Make sure that all relevant prior achievement applications have been submitted to the correct component awarding body, and that a response has been received within the agreed deadline. Communicate any results to relevant staff within your centre, as this may affect the student's study plan.

Useful links

QCDA's Diploma validator tool

http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk/libraryAssets/media/Diploma_validator_user_guide_final.pdf

Work experience guidance

www.qcda.gov.uk/24859.aspx

Prior achievement form

<http://www.qcda.gov.uk/26740.aspx>

Work experience form

<http://www.qcda.gov.uk/26739.aspx>

PLTS completion form

www.qcda.gov.uk/libraryAssets/media/PLTS_completion_form.xls

Extracting progress information – see the Diploma aggregation service quick reference guide

xxxxxxxx/xxxxxxxx/xxxxx/xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxxx

Assessment guidance

www.qcda.gov.uk/13909.aspx

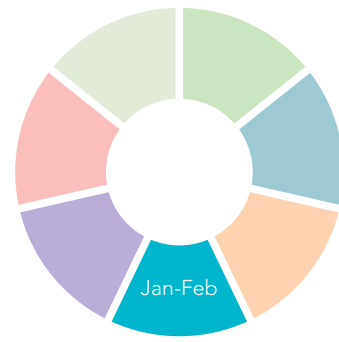
Be prepared – self assessment checklist

Process evaluation	☆	?	▶
Were appropriate staff informed of changes to Diploma learner study plans?			
How were you informed of changes to study plans?			
How did you know that the amended plan was valid and would lead to a Diploma?			
How and to whom would you communicate any discrepancies or errors resulting from the change?			
How would you communicate changes to others within your centre and across your consortium?			
Do plans for on-demand and internally marked assessments enable component awarding bodies to post results to learner accounts in time for Diploma awarding dates?			
How did you determine deadlines for internally assessed work?			
How did you make sure awarding bodies had enough time to moderate and post results to meet awarding dates?			
What would you do if you found out there wasn't enough time for awarding bodies to moderate and post results?			
How did you inform teaching and assessment staff of deadlines?			
Are work experience arrangements in place?			
How did you know which employers were being used for work experience?			
What would happen if an employer or teacher failed to confirm work experience completion?			
What happens if an employer withdraws a work placement opportunity?			
Are personal learning and thinking skills being tracked as part of principal learning and project?			
How did you track the achievement of PLTS?			
How did you make sure teaching and assessment staff were aware of their responsibilities?			

Be prepared – self assessment checklist

Process evaluation	☆	?	▶
Is every student registered with Diploma awarding bodies on the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i>.			
How did you know which Diploma awarding bodies to register students with?			
How did you make sure you registered all Diploma students with a specified Diploma awarding body?			
What evidence do you have that you have registered students with Diploma awarding bodies?			
Have prior achievement applications to component awarding bodies been made where a qualification was taken before the student had a unique learner number?			
How did you know who was responsible for identifying prior achievements?			
How did you know by when prior achievements should be claimed?			
How did they find out which students have prior achievements?			
How did you know which component awarding bodies needed to be informed?			
How did you know whether or not the prior achievement would be recognised by the component awarding body?			
How did you inform the component awarding body of the prior achievement, and what evidence do you have?			
How did you track the claim for prior achievement with the component awarding body?			
What evidence do you have that you submitted claims for prior achievement?			

New Year's resolutions



What's required?

The following tasks should have been completed in January and February, preferably ahead of your component awarding body's deadline:

- exam entries for functional skills, principal learning and ASL for March
- exam entries for principal learning and functional skills projects
- exams entries for ASL for summer exam series
- assessment marks and associated moderation samples for both principal learning and project for January series.

How do you do it?

Your exams policy will tell you which centre is responsible for which exams entries. Typically, all entries for Diploma qualifications are made by the centre where the assessment will take place, but check, as the arrangements may be different in your consortium. Once again, make sure everyone is aware of their responsibilities and deadlines for submitting entries. Have a tracking mechanism in place, so that you know what entries have been made by when and by whom, and follow up missing entries immediately.

Learner study plans will provide you with unit assessment dates and locations to enable you to plan ahead. You'll need to share information to ensure that the right entries can be made by the right centres at the right time. Think about how you're going to communicate: what information do you need to share, which format is best, how do you check the data is accurate, is it secure, and when is it needed by?

By working with colleagues across your consortia, you can determine an arrangement that suits you all to some extent. You may feel strongly about certain points, but don't let your emotions govern how you negotiate. Explain how the options affect you, try to persuade your colleagues round to your way of thinking, and try to reach an agreement. Keeping a rational approach will help you retain good working relationships, and, if you do have to concede something, then take it well, as you may be able to gain a favour in return.

You'll need to make sure everyone is aware of the regulations and deadlines for entering coursework marks for principal learning and project. This may include the need to provide guidance to heads of departments on how to complete forms correctly, or how to carry out internal standardisation and assessment. Make sure teaching and assessment staff across your consortium are aware of coursework mark and sample submission dates for both principal learning and project, and that they understand the implications of not meeting these deadlines. It may be helpful to have a method in place for alerting staff to upcoming deadlines, and contingency plans for when deadlines are missed. Make sure you know who's responsible for the collation of moderator samples, and that they understand their responsibilities and the timescales involved.

Useful links

New Year’s resolutions – self assessment checklist

Process evaluation




Have controlled assessment marks been submitted and moderation samples dispatched for principal learning and project?			
How did you identify who’s responsible for submitting marks and moderation samples across your consortium?			
How did you identify when marks should be submitted?			
How did you ensure marks were submitted on time across your consortium?			
How did you ensure a consistent and collaborative approach to the collation of moderation samples across your consortium?			
How would you handle missing marks or moderation samples within your centre and across your consortium?			
Have Functional skills entries been made for the March series of exams (where required)?			
How did you agree which centres within your consortium were responsible for which entries?			
How did you ensure that the correct entries were made by the correct centre across your consortium?			
How did you communicate entry dates to relevant staff within your centre and across your consortium?			
How did you ensure these deadlines were met?			
How would you handle missed or late entries?			

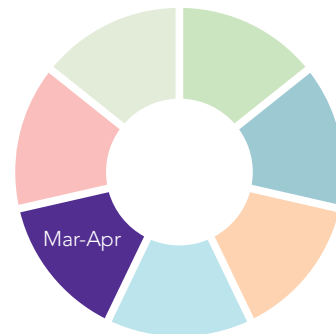
Process evaluation   

What evidence do you have that you submitted entries, and that ULNs were used to identify Diploma students?			
Have principal learning and project qualification entries been completed for summer exam series?			
How will you agree which centres within your consortium are responsible for which entries?			
How will you ensure that the correct entries are made by the correct centre?			
How will you communicate entry dates to relevant staff within your centre and across your consortium?			
How will you ensure these deadlines are met?			
How would you handle missed or late entries?			
What evidence will you have that you submitted entries and that ULNs were used to identify Diploma students?			

Actions to be taken

 Look out for the new (February launch) Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) ULN service for schools.

Housekeeping



What's required?

Housekeeping is a chore, but don't think that the checks you need to do in March and April are mundane. This is your last chance to make sure everything's been done so that your students are on track to receive their Diploma in 2010. You need to:

- check that all January series unit results are present in learner accounts on the *Diploma aggregation service*
- check the deadline for level 3 principal learning and extended project qualification entries
- check that principal learning, project and ASL entries have been made by assessment centre (summer deadline)
- check that cash-in codes have been entered for each full qualification, where this is required by the component awarding body
- check the deadline for applications for access arrangements for June 2010 series (except modified question papers)
- make entries for each principal learning unit, the project and ASL for summer series
- set intention to claim on the *Diploma aggregation service* for students completing in summer
- check that prior achievement requests have been made to component awarding bodies
- run and check the *Diploma aggregation service centre completion report*.

How do you do it?

The tasks above require collaborative working to ensure responsibilities are understood, tasks are completed and deadlines met. Given that colleagues in your centre (and consortium) will be juggling competing priorities getting timely cooperation may be a challenge. Requests for assistance that show empathy for the demands colleagues face are likely to be more productive than blunt demands for information. For example:

- let colleagues know that you understand their situation and appreciate the good work they do ('I know you're busy, but you know most about this...')
- explain briefly the information you need, why you need it and when
- show your appreciation and gratitude for their cooperation ('I know it seems like a small thing, but I really need this information to make sure our students get their awards ... I'd be really grateful if you could do this.')
- once you have made your request, leave colleagues get on with their work.

The points above are illustrative only, use the box below to note any ideas you think will aid cooperation in your centre and consortium.

Improving cooperation – your ideas

If this doesn't work, try again. If that fails, then take it to your manager, or a senior leader responsible for Diploma administration, and discuss what needs to be done and why.

You need to make sure that those students who are expected to achieve their Diploma in summer are on track to succeed. To do this, you can use the *Diploma aggregation service* to view and download results for students. This information can then help you in prompting a component awarding body for actual results where there appears to be a delay in receiving them into the learner account.

You'll need to produce and check each student's completion status, using the *Diploma aggregation service completion status report*. Any discrepancies will need to be sorted as a matter of urgency. This may require you to contact other centres within your consortium to check that entries were submitted correctly, or component awarding bodies to find out why results are missing or don't have the expected grade. While checking the student's progress, you may want to make sure there are no outstanding prior achievement requests for the student, and follow these up directly with the designated component awarding body.

Use the 'Retrieve student account info' or 'Extract student account details' options on the *Diploma aggregation service* to check that an intention to claim has been set for those students planning to achieve their Diploma award in the summer.

You should have established clear lines of communication with the special educational needs department in your centre, and agreed responsibility for each step in the access arrangements application process: who's responsible for gathering, recording and filing supporting evidence, liaising with teaching staff, submitting applications and setting the timescales for these actions? It's important that you work together to compile a complete list of the candidates who may need access arrangements, as this will help to ensure that you make all the necessary applications within the designated timescales. Check whether or not there are any outstanding or pending requests, and follow these up with the associated awarding body.

Useful links

Diploma aggregation service reference guide:

www.qcda.gov.uk/libraryAssets/media/DAS_Reference_guide_for_centres_v1_0.pdf

Diploma aggregation service e-learning tool:

www.qca.org.uk/resources/DAS_e-learning

Diploma aggregation service news and updates:

www.qcda.gov.uk/19061.aspx

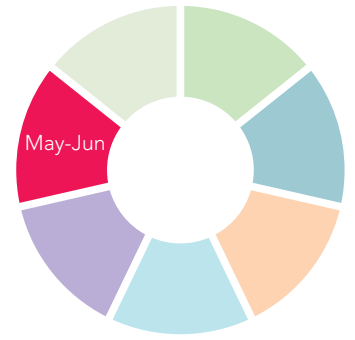
Be prepared – self assessment checklist

Process evaluation



Are all January series unit results are present in learner accounts on the Diploma aggregation service?			
What evidence do you have that January series results have been posted?			
What did you do if results were missing?			
Have all principal learning, project and ASL entries have been made by assessment centre (summer deadline)?			
What evidence do you have that principal learning, project and ASL entries have been made by the assessment centre?			
What did you do if you found a missing or incorrect entry?			
Have cash-in codes have been entered for each full qualification, where this is required by the component awarding body?			
How will you know about deadlines for cash-ins?			
How will you identify which entries should be accompanied by a cash-in code?			
What will you do to ensure the correct cash-in code is used when submitting the entry?			
Have you met deadlines for applications for access arrangements for June 2010 series (except modified question papers)?			
How will you communicate access arrangements to other centres in your consortium?			

On your marks



What's required?

In May and June all marks and associated moderation samples must be submitted to awarding bodies, and component results and achievements recorded in learner accounts. If your students want to claim their award as soon as they can, you'll need to set an intention to claim. This will automatically trigger a claim to the Diploma awarding body, and save you having to go into each learner account and claim each individual Diploma during the summer results period. Key tasks for this period are as follows:

- submit project marks
- complete summer internal standardisation and assessment
- check the deadline for principal learning internal assessment marks submission
- take account of the different results dates in August 2010, if you have level 3 students taking level 2 functional skills
- submit controlled assessment marks and despatch moderation samples for principal learning and project (summer series)
- check all claimed prior achievement is showing in learner accounts on the *Diploma aggregation service*
- ensure work experience is recorded on the *Diploma aggregation service*
- ensure all personal learning and thinking skills assessment is complete and recorded on the *Diploma aggregation service*
- ensure intentions to claim are set on the *Diploma aggregation service*.

How do you do it?

Your role is to make sure everyone is aware of the deadlines for entering coursework marks and also what is expected of them in terms of marking, moderation and supply of moderation samples. You'll need to ensure coursework marks are supplied to you in enough time for them to be input into a database or used to complete awarding body marking submission forms that accompany moderation sample materials. This may involve a tracking mechanism allowing you to monitor and communicate approaching deadlines and late or missing marks.

This is a busier than usual period in the administration cycle. Staff may be getting apprehensive, and this can lead them to act or speak without thinking. At this time your centre will need you to remain calm and professional more than ever, and to diffuse tensions or difficulties that might arise between centres within a consortium. If you find yourself facing strained relations or even a communications breakdown with colleagues or centres you should:

- admit there's a problem
- maintain a professional and cordial tone in your communications, but be clear that your concern is about successful Diploma awarding
- stress that resuming collaborative working will produce a positive outcome for students (successful Diploma awarding)

These points are illustrative only, use the box below to note any ideas you think might help resolve communications problems with colleagues and centres in your consortium.

Resolving communications problems – your ideas

Check your students are still on target to achieve their award. You can use the *Diploma aggregation service* 'Find student account' option (advanced search options) to make sure that work experience and PLTS have been recorded for all students. If these are missing, follow it up directly with those responsible, as your students can't get their Diploma without completing these hurdles and having the achievement recorded in their learner account.

Once again, check there are no outstanding prior achievement requests, and that requested results have been posted to the learner accounts.

Set intentions to claim for selected students using the 'Managing multiple student accounts – set ITCs for a Diploma with a DAB' option on the *Diploma aggregation service*. Follow the guidelines set out in the *Diploma aggregation service reference guide for centres*, and download and print out a list of those students for whom you've set the intention to claim, using the 'Find student account' option (advanced search options).

Process evaluation

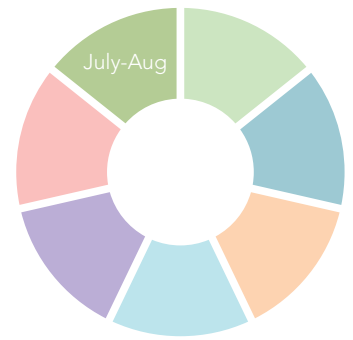


Have controlled assessment marks been submitted and moderation samples dispatched for principal learning and project (summer series)?			
How will you communicate deadlines for coursework mark submission?			
How will you track progress associated with coursework mark submission?			
How will you keep copies of all the coursework marks?			
How will you ensure that coursework marks are completed accurately by assessment staff?			
How will you ensure internal standardisation is carried out before marks are submitted?			

Process evaluation   

How will you make sure you supply assessment staff with the correct address labels and envelopes?			
How will you provide assessment staff with instructions on what you need from them (if you are responsible for submission of the marks and moderation samples to awarding bodies)?			
How will you make sure assessment staff check that the marks entered on the forms don't exceed the maximum mark available, and that each candidate either has a mark entered by their name, or has been recorded as absent?			
What tracking method will you use to make sure marks are received on time?			
What evidence will you have that marks have been submitted?			
Check prior achievement claimed shows in learner accounts on the Diploma aggregation service?			
How will you identify which results should be posted as prior achievements to the learner account?			
How will you know if the posted prior achievement result is correct?			
What will you do if the component awarding body fails to respond to the prior achievement request?			
What will you do if the result posted isn't what's expected?			
How will you let relevant parties within your centre know the outcome?			
Have work experience and PLTS assessment have been recorded on the Diploma aggregation service?			
How will you collect the information necessary to confirm that a student has completed their work experience and PLTS?			
Who's responsible for collecting this information and recording it on the Diploma aggregation service?			
What evidence do you have that work experience and PLTS have been recorded on the Diploma aggregation service?			
What will you do if work experience and/or PLTS haven't been recorded on the Diploma aggregation service as expected?			

Summer holidays



What's required?

Results day will soon be upon us. All hands need to be to the pumps to ensure students receive their qualification results and actual Diploma award on time. On top of current administration, you'll need to make sure of the following:

- › marks for vocational courses have been submitted in time to ensure that the qualification is awarded before the end of the month for inclusion in Diploma awarding
- › claims have been made for on-demand qualifications, to ensure they're included with Diplomas issued at the same time as principal learning and project results
- › the Diploma completion report is downloaded from the *Diploma aggregation service* on results day, listing all students who achieved their Diploma award.

How do you do it?

As described in the previous section, your role is to make sure everyone knows about the regulations and deadlines for entering coursework marks, and what's expected of them in terms of marking, moderation and supply of moderation samples. You'll need to make sure vocational coursework marks are supplied to you in plenty of time to ensure that the qualification is awarded before the end of the month, if it's to be included in the Diploma award.

Using the 'Retrieve student account info – View reports' menu options on the DAS, follow the guidelines set out in the *Diploma aggregation service reference guide* for centres on how to print the Diploma completion report, which lists all students who have achieved their Diploma in your centre, and their associated grade.

Process evaluation



Have marks been submitted for students taking vocational courses so that the qualification is awarded before the end of the month and can be included in Diploma awarding?

How will you communicate deadlines for coursework mark submission for those students taking vocational courses?

How will you track progress associated with submission of these marks?

How are you keeping copies of all the coursework marks?

How will you ensure that the coursework marks are completed accurately by assessment staff?

How will you ensure internal standardisation is carried out before marks are submitted?

Have claims been made for on-demand qualifications so they can be included with Diplomas issued at the same time as principal learning and project results issued in August?

What processes do you have to ensure that all Vocational ASL marks are posted on the Diploma aggregation service in time for summer awarding?

Did you download results for all students using the Diploma progress statement from the Diploma aggregation service on results day?

Who's responsible for generating this report?

To whom should this report be distributed?

What will you do if you find a discrepancy on the report?

Actions to be taken



After aggregation, all Diploma results (including U results) will be available to view on the Diploma awarding body's extranet site, as well as in the learner account.



About this publication

Who is it for?

This publication is for exams office staff who are delivering the Diploma.

What is it about

It provides a checklist and timetable of the essential tasks that happen during the yearly cycle of Diploma administration and practical advice on effective collaborative working with colleagues.

Related publications

Getting ready for the Diploma:

the essential guide for the exams office (QCDA/09/4053)

Administering the Diploma:

The essential guide for the exams office (QCDA/09/4279)

For more copies

Email: orderline@qcda.gov.uk

or download from www.qcda.gov.uk

Reference QCDA/10/4746

Contact information:

Qualifications and Curriculum

Development Agency (QCDA)

53-55 Butts Road

Earlsdon Park

Coventry CV1 3BH

Telephone 0300 303 3010

Textphone 0300 303 3012

info@qcda.gov.uk www.qcda.gov.uk