

This September sees the first teaching cohorts arriving in a number of schools and colleges. TEP is committed to supporting and developing teaching and learning material for this exciting new line of learning.



The introduction of the

**14-19**

# Engineering Diploma

Variously described as “the most important innovation in English education for fifty years” and with the potential for becoming “the qualification of choice for young people” the diplomas are now emerging from the planning stage into reality.

The purpose of the Diploma is to provide an alternative route to learning which combines vocational relevance with applied academic rigour. It is designed to provide a workforce for the future which is “job ready” and the inclusion of a high proportion of applied and work related content is designed to add considerable relevance to learning.


All over the country groups of teachers and lecturers are forming clusters to plan in detail how they are going to deliver this entirely new approach to teaching and learning which, for some of them, starts this September.

They are working together to provide the courses which will provide relevant work related learning. Engineering is amongst the five Diploma lines being offered in 2008.

These new diplomas are offered at three different levels. Broadly there are 7 principal learning units at level 1, eight at level 2 and nine at level 3 that incrementally reflect the range and diversity and depth of study required.

Engineering		GCSE / GCE Equivalence	Number of Units
Level 1	Foundation	5 GCSE D–G	7
Level 2	Higher	7 GCSE A*–C	8
Level 3	Advanced	3.5–4.5 GCE	9

The Engineering Diploma has been developed by a partnership of the Sector Skills councils lead by SEMTA for engineering who specified the content, the Curriculum and Qualifications Authority and the Awarding Bodies such as AQA and City & Guilds.



The Diplomas have a fairly complex structure, with a number of interdependent parts:

- **Principal Learning** - which defines the subject content, mainly internally assessed
- **Generic Learning** - transferable skills which are used in all walks of life. There is a real emphasis on team working. This is assessed through principal learning but includes Functional Skills which are assessed separately until 2010 when GCSE will also include the functional skills.
- **The Project** - an opportunity to use project management skills which is equivalent to half a GCSE at foundation or higher or an AS level at advanced
- **Work Experience** - ten days work placement
- **Additional and Specialist Learning** - other qualifications which give opportunities for the learning to be broader or reach greater depth of specialism e.g. a welding or electronic qualification at the same level.
- Only the assessments for principal learning and the project will matter when the diploma grade is determined, but all three functional skills have to be passed at the appropriate level.

The purpose of Additional or Specialist learning is to provide either a broad base to the learner's education or if there is a local need, or the learner wishes to personalise their learning by completing a more specialised qualification which provides more depth. So both GCSE subjects and vocational qualifications may be taken.

### What are the units about?

They range in scope considerably, and offer a mixture of learning related to the technical content of engineering, career pathways and roles with opportunities for communication, design and innovation.

An example might be in electronics which starts at Foundation Level with a simple introduction and progresses to instrumentation at Advanced level. Other units are concerned with careers, production, design, maintenance, materials, environmental impact and computer applications.

At Advanced level two units are designed to ensure learners have the right mathematical skills and scientific knowledge to progress to higher education and develop careers in engineering.



TEP is delighted to be working with one of our academic partners AQA-City & Guilds who helped compile this first feature. A useful insight can be gained by visiting <http://www.diplomainfo.org.uk> where all the AQA-City & Guilds specifications can be obtained.

