

# GCSEs in vocational subjects

**A summary of resources to support teachers in schools and colleges that offer the following qualifications:**

**Applied Art and Design**

**Applied Business**

**Engineering**

**Health and Social Care**

**Applied Information and Communication  
Technology (ICT)**

**Leisure and Tourism**

**Manufacturing**

**Applied Science**

**GCSEs in vocational subjects** – This leaflet is a summary of resources that support teachers in schools and colleges that offer the qualifications to their students. The list of resources is limited to those produced or funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Qualifications & Curriculum Authority (QCA), Ofsted, the Learning & Skills Development Agency (LSDA) and the three main awarding bodies (AQA, Edexcel and OCR).

## Information leaflets

- **GCSEs in vocational subjects – a general guide and overview of the qualifications** (revised November 2003) – This red leaflet is a general introduction to the qualifications for teachers and other education professionals. It provides basic information on the purpose of the qualifications, the subjects available, the role of key skills, qualification design, how the qualifications are taught, assessment, where the qualifications might lead and the LSDA local support networks. (DfES/0809/2003 – free).
- **GCSEs in vocational subjects – an introduction for students and their parents/carers** (revised November 2003) – This green leaflet is a general introduction to the qualifications for students and their carers. It answers questions such as, 'Why choose the GCSEs in vocational subjects?'; 'What subjects are available?'; 'How are the GCSEs taught?'; 'What do the GCSEs involve?'; 'Where might they lead?'; and, 'What else should be considered?' There are also quotations from young people who have completed vocational courses. (DfES/0810/2003 – free).
- **GCSEs in vocational subjects – an introduction to the links between careers education and guidance and the teaching and learning of young people taking the GCSEs.** – This gold leaflet is an introduction to how the work of careers teachers, personal advisers and other professionals providing careers guidance, links to teaching and learning for GCSEs in vocational subjects. It explains the purpose of the qualifications, the subjects available, key issues for careers guidance for students considering choosing the qualifications, guidance support for learners throughout their courses, the role of work experience and guidance for progression. (DfES/0811/2003 – free).
- **GCSEs in vocational subjects – an employers guide and overview to the qualifications.** – This purple leaflet gives employers a general overview of the qualifications and how they can support the learning objectives of the qualifications. It explains the purpose of the qualifications; the subjects available; how the qualifications will help employers; how employers can help schools and colleges; where the qualifications might lead and the national and local support available to employers who want to work with schools and colleges to ensure the qualifications reflect current and emerging practice in the vocational sector. (DfES/0808/2003 – free).

## Managing vocational and work-related learning

- **Vocational and work-related learning at key stage 4 – guidance for managers in schools and their partners in the community.** The guidance was produced in response to Ofsted's recommendation that the DfES 'should establish a national framework for those involved in the planning and monitoring of programmes and on the use of accreditation'. It includes sections on coherent management frameworks, planning provision, teaching and learning, accreditation and partnerships. (Revised December 2003 DfES/0514/2003 – free).
- **Work-related learning at key stage 4 – advice for practitioners on legal background and other areas.** The guidance arose out of the Increased Flexibility for 14–16 Year Olds programme, and aims to address some of the concerns. Sections cover supervision of students, child protection and vetting arrangements, approved external qualifications, reporting attendance, extended work experience placements, health and safety, insurance cover, disclosure of information and child employment. (DfES/0132/2003 – free). The guidance is currently being revised as *Work-related learning and the law* for publication early in 2004.
- **Work-related learning for all at key stage 4: guidance for implementing the statutory requirement in England.** The guidance is for curriculum managers and coordinators of work-related learning in schools with Key Stage 4 provision and other bodies that collaborate with schools on the provision of work-related learning. The booklet sets out the statutory requirement and the non-statutory framework for work-related learning. The framework contains guidance on the opportunities for work-related learning schools should provide, suggestions about minimum provision, desirable learning outcomes and examples of how schools can meet the requirement. (QCA/03/1168 – free).
- **Extending work-related learning at key stage 4 –** This publication is the result of a survey by Ofsted of how schools take advantage of opportunities for extending work-related learning at Key Stage 4. The survey focused on all pupils but took strong interest in the learning needs of disadvantaged pupils. The report identifies features of effective practice, and comments on the role of policy and design of programmes, timetabling and organisation, and accreditation. It looks at issues such as the identification of pupils, their profile of attainment and attitudes, and the impact of the programmes. (Ofsted/HMI/276/2001 – free). Also to be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/docs/1107.pdf>
- **Work related aspects of the curriculum in secondary schools.** Ofsted 1998 – A summary of several sources of evidence following inspections by HMI, and spanning all aspects of work-related learning, including vocational courses, work experience, careers education and the role of citizenship. (Ofsted/HMI/160/2000 – free).
- **Key stage 4: towards a flexible curriculum** – A report of a survey of most forms of provision for learners aged 14–16 which coincided with implementation of the regulations for disapplication. It comments on the effects of curriculum variation and draws attention to the needs of those not accessing education regularly. It seeks to examine the changes being made by schools to the curriculum in KS4 and the effects the changes have on a pupil's achievement. It explores the use of the programmes to motivate young people who have lost interest in school and become disengaged from learning, assesses the quality of provision made outside school for young people and evaluates the links between schools, other providers and local education authorities. (Ofsted/HMI 517/2003 – free).
- **Developing new vocational pathways: Interim report on the introduction of the new GCSEs** – An Ofsted report on the standards of achievement, quality of teaching and learning and attitudes, behaviour and motivation of students. It comments on curriculum organisation and management, general management, staffing and resources and external links to

support the courses. (*Ofsted, HMI/1630/August 2003 – free*).  
To be found at:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/docs/3374.pdf>

- **Part One General National Vocational Qualification Pilot: Final Report**, Ofsted ISBN 0113501056. A summary report from a series of surveys by HMI looking at the development and evolution of these qualifications during their pilot stage. It identifies a number of key elements for successful provision of vocational courses at key stage 4.
- **Work related learning toolkit** – A resource file produced by the LEA Curriculum Advisers Network (funded by the DfES) and covering all aspects of vocational and work-related learning, available through LEAs. It will be up-dated and revised by early 2004. (DfES/LEACAN 2001) Information can be found at: [www.leacan.org.uk](http://www.leacan.org.uk)
- **New start partnership projects** – Ofsted report on the Department for Education and Skills funded work-related learning projects, to be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.summary&id=701>
- **Guidance for FE colleges providing for young learners**, The guidance from the Association of Colleges and LEACAN, supported by the DfES, seeks to clarify for colleges their statutory duties in respect of young learners, outlines the necessary policies and procedures to ensure those statutory duties are met and draws upon existing practice in colleges to offer exemplars for local customisation. Further information can be found at the association's web site at: [www.aoc.co.uk](http://www.aoc.co.uk)

## Subject specific guidance

### Information supporting all of the subjects

- **Resources for courses in GCSEs in vocational subjects**, – A set of CD-Rom discs from LSDA that provide a range of resources to support vocational learning for 14 to 19 year olds, also available on the Vocational Learning website (see below).
- LSDA operates a support programme for subject teachers, details of which can be found on the Vocational Learning website (see below).
- The three awarding bodies have produced resources for each of the subjects they offer. Information can be found at their websites listed below.
- QCA have published a set of **Confirming standards guides** for the Intermediate and GNVQs. Some of these guides cover the same subjects as the eight GCSEs in vocational subjects and may provide useful information for teachers who are new to the standards required.

### Further information supporting some of the subjects:

- The Centre for Education and Industry (CEI) have been funded by the DfES, through LSDA, to produce classroom teaching materials for the GCSEs in *Health and Social Care, Applied Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Leisure and Tourism and Applied Science*. It is expected that these will be available on the Vocational Learning website and CD Rom from early 2004 onwards. (See below) Schemes of work for the same subjects, from CEI, will also be available in the same formats by Spring 2004. Further information will be posted on LSDA's website at: [www.vocationallearning.org.uk](http://www.vocationallearning.org.uk)
- **Inspecting business education with guidance on self-evaluation** – Ofsted's framework for inspecting business education, to be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.summary&id=1049>

- The Department for Education and Skills have funded the Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (SEMTEA) to produce materials to support the teaching of the GCSEs in *Engineering, Manufacturing and Applied Science*. Information can be found at their website at: [www.gcseinengineering.com](http://www.gcseinengineering.com)

## Work experience

- **Work experience: a guide for secondary schools** – This booklet offers general guidance and practical advice on the main issues relating to work experience for students during Key Stage 4. It is intended to help schools in establishing well-structured programmes that generate maximum learning benefit for students. It covers issues such as policy; the role of teachers, employers and parents; curricular links; organisational issues; links to other work-related activities; legal background; insurance, and health and safety. (*DfES/SPD/WES/01/02(rev) – free*).
- **Raising standards: Health & safety on work experience** – This guide aims to highlight the good practice which demonstrates how all partners in the work experience process can work together to improve the health and safety aspects of work experience. There are sections on planning and organisation, preparation of pupils, parents, employers and teachers, the placement and the post-placement review. (*DfES/OPID/GPS/RS/2/1999 – free*).
- **Work experience quality standards** – A set of three leaflets from QCA intended as guidance to help improve the quality of work experience. Standards are presented for schools and colleges, for employers, and for central work experience organisers. (*QCA/1998*).

The Department for Education and Skills is to publish further guidance for schools and colleges, early in 2004, on using work experience to support the GCSEs in vocational subjects.

## Education business links

- **Developing effective school-business links** – The Department for Education and Skills is to publish new guidance for schools and colleges in February 2004 that identifies successful practice in establishing and developing effective links between schools/colleges and local businesses. The focus will be on how such links can support the teaching and learning for the GCSEs in vocational subjects.
- **Tomorrow's workforce** – This is a pack of 9 leaflets for employers to help them develop their links with schools and colleges through supporting the GCSEs in vocational subjects. It includes case studies of how employers are currently supporting the 8 GCSEs in vocational subjects. (DfES/December 2003 – free). DfES/0726/2003.
- Further information about the DfES's support for education business links can be found at the [www.dfes.gov.uk/ebnet](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/ebnet) website, with links to a number of other key websites.

## Key skills

- **Key Skills for developing employability** – This booklet is designed to help teachers adopt teaching styles that promote key skills and enable students to see the relevance of their studies to the world of work. (*QCA/2001/752 – £6*).
- **The Key Skills Support Programme** – information can be found on the LSDA and vocational learning websites (see overleaf).

## Careers education and guidance

- **Careers education and guidance in England: a national framework 11 to 19** – This document presents a non-statutory framework for CEG 11 to 19. The framework offers guidance on how schools, colleges and work-based training organisations

can develop improved programmes of CEG, which better prepare young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The framework consists of learning outcomes for each key stage and post 16, and suggestions as to how schools can achieve the outcomes. There is also guidance on using the framework in different settings; securing coherent guidance provision; improving quality; curriculum organisation for CEG; progression in learning outcomes and links with other aspects of personal development learning. (DfES/0163/2003 – free).

- **Developing Skills for Career Management** – This guidance from QCA is for teachers and lecturers with responsibility for careers education, and senior managers responsible for teaching and learning in schools and colleges. It provides practical ideas and teaching strategies to develop and improve the skills young people require in order to manage their careers. It makes suggestions on how teachers can help young people become self-reliant, able to make informed judgements and take decisions about their career and life choices. It will be useful to schools and colleges in developing their careers education and guidance programmes. It will help schools and colleges provide opportunities for young people to practise and develop skills for career management. (QCA/2001/01/751 – £6).
- **The Connexions partnership framework** – Ofsted’s report on a national evaluation of the introduction of the Connexions service, to be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/docs/2309.pdf>
- **Inspection of careers education, with guidance on self-evaluation** – Ofsted’s framework for inspecting careers education and guidance, to be found at: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=pubs.summary&id=2919>
- Details about the careers education and guidance support programme, funded by the DfES, can be found at: [www.cegnet.co.uk](http://www.cegnet.co.uk)

## Other published resources

- **Learning through work-related contexts** – The guidance is intended for subject teachers, heads of faculty or department, curriculum coordinators and senior managers. (QCA/1998/310 – £5 to £10).
- **Disapplication of the national curriculum** – This guidance, revised in January 2003, explains how to disapply aspects of the National Curriculum to meet particular student’s needs if it is felt that the full National Curriculum may not be the most appropriate route to maximise their learning and achievement. It explains issues such as the purpose of disapplication, the different forms of disapplication available to schools and the statutory criteria schools must meet when disapplying students from aspects of the National Curriculum. (DfES/0076/2003). [www.dfes.gov.uk/disapply](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/disapply)

## Website details

- **Department for Education and Skills** – [www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications) has pages on 14 to 19 developments and on GCSEs. [www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19) gives the government’s policy context for developments in the 14 to 19 curriculum. [www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19pathfinders](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19pathfinders) shows how the Department for Education and Skills funded *Pathfinder Projects* are being used in certain areas to test the GCSEs in vocational subjects in different learning contexts.

- **QCA** – [www.qca.org.uk/14-19](http://www.qca.org.uk/14-19) – the website has different pathways for 11 to 16 schools, 6<sup>th</sup> form schools and colleges of further education. The site contains guidance on curriculum planning, meeting individual needs, using qualifications, collaboration, careers education and guidance and work-related learning. There are case studies to illustrate a range of approaches to the 14 to 19 curriculum.
- **Ofsted** – [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) – gives details of the inspection framework, guidance on inspection of subjects, published national evaluations by HMI and inspection reports.
- **LSDA** – [www.lsda.org.uk](http://www.lsda.org.uk) – gives information on their support programmes, including the Centre of Vocational Excellence, Key skills support and vocational learning as well as their recent publication *Successful engagement guidance for work with employers post 16*. Specific information about GCSEs in vocational subjects can be found at: [www.vocationallearning.org.uk](http://www.vocationallearning.org.uk). The site has pages on LSDA’s local support networks, subject groups and in-house consultancy programme. There are pages on management of programmes, business links and progression, as well as teaching and learning resources, on-line learning packages, development projects and case studies. The teaching and learning resources pages contain information on assignment writing and the assessment of student’s work.
- **The three main awarding bodies** at: [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk), [www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk), [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk). Enquirers can access the specifications for each subject and additional guidance materials as well as finding out about the awarding bodies’ current programmes of support meetings. The sites also give contact details for staff who can assist with specific enquiries from teachers (or students) about the qualifications.

You may also wish to view the DfES website at: [www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/qualifications), where details of different formats of this leaflet will be posted. We would welcome feedback on this leaflet. Your comments can be posted on the above website under “GCSEs in vocational subjects”.

General information about education is available on the Parents Centre: [www.dfes.gov.uk/parents](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/parents)

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