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“Some of our learners...are the ones that did not come in with any real...expectations of going any further. But when they start to learn because they are interested in something they really like, something that suddenly they are good at... a door is opened.”

**Teacher, Solihull College**

“In a Level 3 lesson, learners are given the opportunity to become the experts.”

**Teacher, Sussex Downs College**

“Working with Level 2 learners was a different experience to previous Level 3 groups. Although the practical skills being developed were the same, differences in the levels of their initial ability required a different introduction to the project.”

**Teacher developing a virtual work setting for SHD, Sussex Downs College**

“I really understand why I have to talk to people in different ways now, I can see the real point of this work, rather than just writing things from the board.”

**Learner, CCE group**

# Foreword

As acting Head of 14-19 Participation and Attainment Group, I am pleased to be involved in work to support continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

It is absolutely essential for the well-being of individuals, society and the economy that young people achieve qualifications that will enable them to pursue full and productive careers and give them the best life chances. High quality, innovative and engaging teaching and learning practice are key to ensuring young people are motivated to participate, achieve and progress to further learning.

The 14-19 phase of learning is particularly important - it is the stage during which young people have to make key choices about their future and the stage at which the progress they make will have the greatest effect on their future employment and earning prospects. Those professionals who work with these young people have a key role in ensuring that they are given the best opportunities and the support to make the right choices for them and to go on to achieve, particularly at Level 2 and Level 3.

Level 2 (which is equivalent to GCSE A\*-C) is the threshold for employability and acts as a stepping stone to achievement at higher levels. Level 3 is the threshold for higher education and skilled employment. We want as many people as possible to reach these levels. We know that:

- if young people have opportunities to try out different post-16 options they are more likely to make choices that work for them and maximise their participation and achievement in learning, particularly at Level 2
- achieving Level 2 at 16 clearly increases a person's chances of reaching Level 3 by 19: currently 76% of those getting to Level 2 at 16 progress to Level 3 by 19, compared to only 12% of those below Level 2 at 16
- 82% of those with Level 2 including English and Mathematics reach Level 3, compared with 51% without English and Mathematics.
- a large proportion of young people who do not reach Level 2 at age 16, but do reach Level 3 by age 19, acquire their Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications through vocational qualifications.

We have made excellent progress in increasing the number of young people who achieve by age 19 and we are seeing improvement at all stages - more young people are coming out of school with Level 2 (equivalent to five good GCSEs) - and FE, work-based learning and vocational learning are adding more each year. The number progressing to Level 3 is also increasing. However, we're not complacent - just over a quarter of young people still reach 19 without having reached Level 2 and more than half do not achieve Level 3. This is unacceptable.

We have set challenging targets for the percentage of 19 year olds achieving Level 2 and Level 3 through the new CSR07 Public Service Agreements and the Children's Plan Goals. They represent a degree of stretch which will challenge the system and galvanise the whole delivery chain to achieve them.

You play a vital role in helping young people acquire the skills they need to achieve and progress to higher levels. The increases in attainment we have seen in recent years are testaments to your hard work and dedication. We need this support to continue and increase if we are to ensure this country has the right people and skills to enable us to compete in the global economy. I hope you find these materials help you deliver an exciting and successful curriculum for the young people you teach.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Herrington' with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Dominic Herrington**

Acting Head of 14-19 Participation and Attainment Group,  
Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

# Introduction

Welcome to the Supporting learner progression resources, which focus on learner progression from Level 2 and Level 3 and/or to employment. The resources have been developed in consultation with teachers\*, managers and other experts.

The Leitch Report in 2006 makes it clear that the number of unskilled jobs will decline sharply in the future and that young people must achieve Level 3 qualifications if they are to be secure financially as adults. Whilst Level 2 is the threshold for employability and acts as a stepping stone to achievement at higher levels, Level 3 is the threshold for higher education and skilled employment.

Your organisation has a key role in developing and promoting a culture of progression and lifelong learning for all, a culture that supports young people and adults and equips them with the skills they need to succeed in a rapidly changing environment.

This booklet introduces you to a variety of thought-provoking ideas and activities, to help you and your organisation develop innovative approaches to improve learner progression.

\*We use 'teaching and learning' and 'teacher' as generic terms to include:

- teaching, training and learning
- teachers, tutors, trainers, lecturers and instructors in the further education (FE) system.

## Aims

The ideas, approaches and activities exemplified in these resources have been designed to:

- encourage providers to define what progression means for their organisation and community
- enable providers to adopt a whole organisation approach to developing strategies for motivating, encouraging and inspiring learners at Level 2 and supporting their progression to Level 3 and/or employment
- identify examples of approaches and activities from QIA's Teaching and Learning Programme that have specifically inspired learners to focus on their learning for personal and career development
- encourage teachers to reflect on and extend their teaching and learning approaches to engage and meet the needs and aspirations of diverse groups of learners at different levels of learning.



## **Progression from Level 2 and Level 3**

In this context, we refer to progression as an individual learner's progression from engagement in learning to further stages of learning and employment to fulfil personal, professional and/ or academic aspirations (DCSF 2008). The factors that will encourage learners to persist, attain and progress can be aligned with the stages of the learner journey. These stages are:

Recruitment

Induction

Initial assessment and diagnostic testing

Individual learning plans

Teaching and learning

Assessment

Progression

Learners frequently cite teachers and 'good teaching' as key to their persistence and progression.

These resources will help you, your team and your organisation to support your learners at all stages and transitions during their learning journeys.

## **Continuing professional development**

These resources offer individuals, teams and managers continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities that can directly contribute to the development of processes and procedures to support learner progression in your organisation. Your participation in the CPD activities in these resources can contribute towards meeting your 30 hour (or pro rata) CPD requirements.

# How have we developed these resources?

## Progression themes

As part of our research into progression and our consultation with others, we explored aspects of pastoral and peer support, personalised learning, flexible approaches to learning, inter-professional and partnership working, supporting transitions and progression measures.

We have identified and prioritised the following key themes as a basis for our new resources and signposts to existing resources.

- Exploring progression to develop a whole organisation approach.
- The learner journey.
- Managing transitions.
- The effective use of data to underpin whole organisational approaches to progression.
- The use of effective teaching and learning techniques in supporting progression.

## New resources

We have developed new resources to encourage individuals, members of teams and organisations to reflect on the impact of existing progression measures and strategies for supporting learners to progress successfully from Level 2 and Level 3 and/or employment.

# What's in the resources?

The resources can be downloaded and printed from the website or the Supporting learner progression CD-ROM. They consist of:

- **Making a move booklet** - this booklet introduces the key progression themes and encourages teachers, teams and organisations to explore and make effective use of the resources on the website or the Supporting learner progression CD-ROM.
- **Supporting learner progression at Level 2 and Level 3** – this downloadable document provides information on the national context for progression, the critical success factors in supporting learners to progress and provides case studies to exemplify approaches that others have tried.
- **Exploring progression CPD card activity** – this encourages interprofessional teams in an organisation and across partnerships to consider how to support learner engagement and persistence at Levels 2 and 3 and progression to further study or employment. Teams can explore how to make effective use of data to help with this.
- **Learner journey CPD activity** – supported by learner profile cards, prompt cards and action planning templates, this helps teachers, teams and organisations explore ways of helping learners achieve well at all stages of their learning journeys and improve progression from Level 2 and Level 3.
- **Managing transitions** – this section builds on the learner journey and helps teams focus on transition stages at the beginning and end of a programme of learning. Accompanied by case studies it helps individuals and teams reflect on learner feedback on the quality of learner recruitment, induction and exit processes.
- **Effective teaching and learning** – a CPD activity and a CPD builder tool that encourage teachers to reflect on how they can support learner progression from Level 2 and Level 3 by embedding a range of relevant skills, including study skills and employability skills. Learners at different stages on their learner journey not only have diverse

individual learning needs, but also differing needs relevant to the level of their knowledge, skills and understanding. These resources will help you think about the most appropriate teaching and learning approaches to engage and motivate learners both at Level 2 and also at Level 3.

- **Progression check tool** – this is a tool to help teams to review where you are with regard to supporting progression for the learners in your organisation.
- **Subject specific resources** – supported by signposts and guidance, these will help teachers, teams and organisations to explore existing subject specific resources from the perspective of progression. From QIA's website and the Supporting learner progression CD-ROM, we have provided signposts to appropriate materials from Construction and the built environment, Creative and media, Engineering, Information technology, Mathematics, Modern foreign languages, Science and Society, health and development.



# Next steps

These dynamic, flexible resources can be used to meet the diverse needs of yourself, your colleagues and your learners in a range of different organisations across the FE system. These may include colleges, work-based learning organisations, prisons, adult learning, voluntary and community organisations and the workplace.

The resources can be used for large or small groups or for individuals. You can also use the activities effectively in a variety of learning environments, including classrooms, workshops, resource centres, workplaces and community settings.

The next step is to go to the website or CD-ROM and explore the variety of stimulating resources that will support your professional development, your learners' achievement and progression and benefit your team and organisation.

<http://excellence.qia.org.uk>

