The Diploma

Bringing learning to life

Portable Technologies

Digital Object - Orientated

Networks & Telecom

Input / Output & Storage

Networked

Integrated

IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Join a sector that is increasingly important

The UK IT industry is a fast-growing and dynamic sector. More than a million people already work in it, and with growth rates of up to eight times the national average, there are plenty of exciting and rewarding career opportunities. In fact, we need more than 150,000 people every year just to fill new positions.

And IT is vital in just about every industry you can think of, from retail to sport and from music to banking. That's why understanding technology is an important part of today's education.

For a successful career in IT you'll need to work well with people, understand the way business and technology work together, and to be able to bring all these skills together to run effective projects.

BUILD ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

The Diploma in Information Technology gives you a chance to learn in different settings. It lets you explore technology, and see, first hand, the role that it plays in organisations, for individuals and in society as a whole.

You'll also learn how to manage and deliver successful IT projects, and be able to apply what you've learnt when working on your own projects.

What will
I learn?

All levels of Diploma in Information Technology focus on three main themes:

Business: How organisations work and the role technology can play.

People: How to work well with other people.

Technology: How to create technology solutions.

HOW IS THE DIPLOMA MADE UP?
Principal learning (subject learning you have to do)

At the heart of the Diploma are your core IT subjects. These will teach you the main things you need to know about the IT sector. You'll learn about the issues that are affecting the industry today, how it works and what skills you need to have to work within it.

"In order to compete in the global economy, UK companies urgently need more young people to understand technology in business. The content of the Diploma will help develop students, both for university courses and rewarding, flexible careers."

**Andy Hill,
Head of Resourcing,
Vodafone**

ACTIVITIES YOU MIGHT DO IN YOUR PRINCIPAL LEARNING

These are just some examples of the kind of learning you'll be doing.

FOUNDATION DIPLOMA	HIGHER DIPLOMA	ADVANCED DIPLOMA
Business You'll learn how organisations use and benefit from technology. You could, for example, produce an article that looks at how different organisations use technology, such as how a sports centre uses technology to keep track of its members.	**Business** You'll learn the basics of how to manage projects, for example planning and scheduling all the tasks involved (using a tool called critical path analysis). You could, for example, write project plans and learn about Gantt charts (another tool to help you manage and resource project tasks).	**Business** You'll understand the way technology has had an impact on society, organisations and individuals – with a global focus. You'll also look at how the internet and mobile communications have transformed the business world. You could, for example, investigate the dotcom boom and the rise of e-commerce.
People You'll learn about team-working. You could, for example, give a group presentation about a topic of your choice.	**People** You'll learn to write proposals focusing on particular challenges or opportunities within a business, using creative, investigative, interpersonal and numerical reasoning skills. You could, for example, set up and run a mini-company in a team where you have a specific role to write business documents and run business meetings.	**People** You'll gain the knowledge and the skills to work effectively in a business environment. You could, for example, set up a team to analyse a business's processes, and then give a team presentation to management.
Technology You'll learn about databases and why they are important. You could, for example, learn how to set up simple databases for a specific type of business.	**Technology** You'll learn how to make prototypes and test your product to make sure it meets its specific purpose and audience needs. You could, for example, research a presentation on how two online businesses run profitably by filling particular consumer niches.	**Technology** You'll learn to create an integrated technology solution for a specific type of user. You could, for example, design, develop, test and implement a small-scale technology solution, where you'll learn to apply a 'three-tier architecture' (this is a software that lets you separate an application's logic into three layers).
Cross-platform: multimedia You'll learn how to create your own multimedia product, such as a website or an e-book for a specific business purpose.	**Cross-platform: multimedia** You'll gain the technical knowledge and skills to design and develop your own multimedia product for a specific audience and purpose.	**Cross-platform: multimedia** You'll learn how to design and develop your own multimedia product using video, audio, music and animation, for example an advertisement with time-line animation, sound and text.

ADDITIONAL AND SPECIALIST LEARNING (CHOICES YOU CAN MAKE)

At each level, you can develop your particular IT interests further by taking specialist courses relating to your chosen subject and career ambitions. You could, for example, learn about software design, web development or business enterprise.

Or you might choose a GCSE or A level in a range of different subjects, like economics for example, which would help you get onto a university course. If you want to carry on studying computer science courses at university, it would be a good idea to take additional maths.

You can also broaden your course by taking an additional subject that reflects your other interests and career ambitions – like a language, a science, or a creative subject like music.

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS IN ENGLISH, MATHS AND ICT

Like all Diploma students, you'll develop a good standard of English, maths and ICT. These subjects are essential to succeed in any business or learning environment, whether you decide to continue in the IT sector or not.

PERSONAL, LEARNING AND THINKING SKILLS

All Diploma students will develop personal, learning and thinking skills, such as team-working, creative thinking and self-management. These are vital skills in both life and work, and will be useful to you in the future, no matter which path you take.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Your Diploma will give you the opportunity to do at least 10 days' work experience. This is a great way to use the knowledge, understanding and skills you have learnt in the classroom, and experience what work is like from the inside.

STUDENT PROJECTS

During your Diploma, you'll complete a student project to demonstrate the skills and knowledge that you have learnt. This could be a written piece of work, like a report or an investigation, or it could be a practical piece of work, like a website.

You may want to use video, film, a database or another technology to complete your project.

What a **Diploma** will lead to

A Diploma in Information Technology will give you the skills you need for either university or work, and is a first step towards a career in IT.

It could lead you to a university degree in computing, computer networking, information systems, business and information technology, computer games software, multimedia or graphic design.

Or it could help you begin a career as an IT professional, business manager or entrepreneur. You will also have the skills and capability to thrive in the e-economy.

However, the Diploma in IT doesn't mean you have to opt for a career in this sector. Because a Diploma teaches a mix of subjects, it will give you the skills that will be welcomed by colleges, universities and employers, no matter what you choose to do.

Case study

WHAT I WILL LEARN...

There are seven mandatory units that I have to study as part of the course. I am going to do some specialist learning in gaming software, and I'm taking an A level in maths. It will be really useful whatever I decide to do next.

My extended project will look into redesigning my school's website. I'm thinking of recruiting other sixth formers to help.

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO...

Work experience will be at a big agency that develops interactive games. It's going to be amazing to be part of the whole process and see what happens at every stage. I'll be doing some programming there, and generally helping out with anything they need. You never know, I might be asked to go back during the summer and do some part-time work.

THE FUTURE...

I'm hoping to do a degree in either multimedia computing or computer games software development. If I get to do more work experience at the agency too, I'll get a great head start in my career.

This case study is an illustration of how and why a student might decide to do a Diploma. It does not refer to a real individual.

THE YEAR IS 2010. THIS COULD BE THE EXPERIENCE OF ONE DIPLOMA STUDENT.

MEET STANLEY, A DIPLOMA IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STUDENT

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Stanley, 16, from Portsmouth is studying for an Advanced Diploma in IT.

'I want to do a course that lets me mix IT with business, so I can focus on multimedia and digital technology.'

"The introduction of the Diploma is undoubtedly one of the most exciting developments in education for young people over the past generation. It is clear that it will engage and stretch learners of all abilities, and provide universities with students who will be able to present new skills and competencies."

Julian Skyrme,
Admissions Policy and
Widening Participation,
University of Manchester

Want to find out **more?**

To find out more about the Diploma in Information Technology, speak to your teacher or careers adviser. You can also find more information about Diplomas on these websites:

www.direct.gov.uk/diplomas
www.connexions-direct.com
www.e-skills.com/diploma

DOWNLOADING THIS LEAFLET

If you'd like to download this leaflet, go to
http://yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas/explore_more/media_centre

FINDING A COURSE IN YOUR AREA

If you'd like to find out where you can study for this Diploma in your area, go to
http://yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas/where_to_study

or have a look at the prospectus showing all courses in your area: follow the link on **www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/**

You can download this leaflet or order copies online at
www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications Search using reference DCSF-00495-2008.

You can also order more copies by calling 0845 60 222 60;
textphone 0845 60 555 60. Please quote reference 00495-2008LEF-EN.

For further information, see **www.teachernet.gov.uk/diplomas**

For more information about the new 14–19 curriculum,
visit **www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19**

Information about the structure of Diplomas and resources to support their
delivery by schools and colleges are available from the Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority at **www.qca.org.uk/diploma**

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**department for
children, schools and families**