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Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration

Qualification Offer Review

Richard Thompson

29th September 2006

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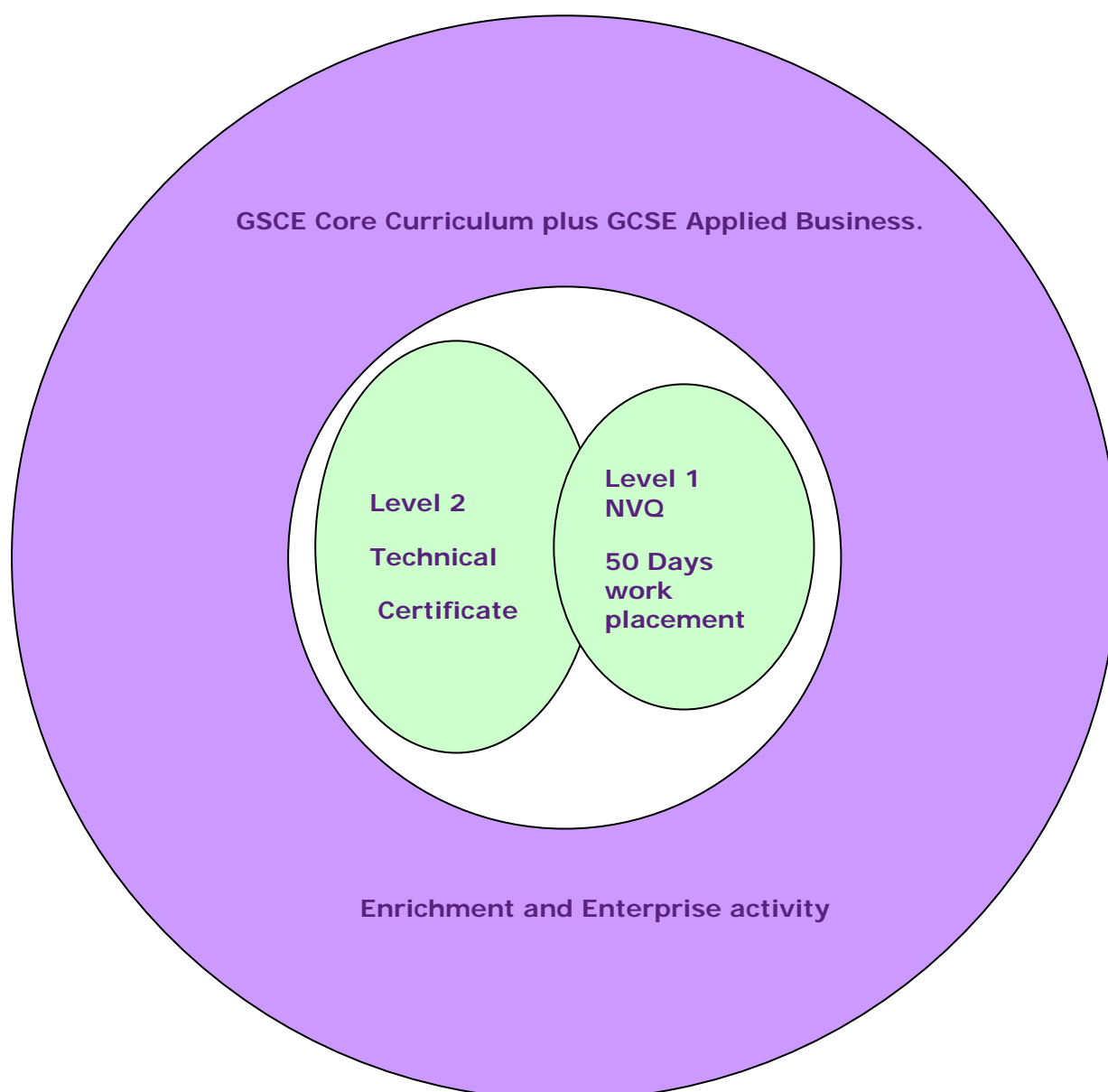
Introduction

In June 2006, the CfA embarked on the task of evaluating the current qualifications offered to Young Apprenticeship partnerships in the Business & Administration sector. These qualifications are fundamental to developing skills, knowledge and understanding throughout the programme that resonate with employers within the Business & Administration workforce. The need to regularly evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of these qualifications is essential to the success of the Young Apprenticeship programme.

Below is a list of the main qualifications currently offered to partnerships:

- Level 2 Technical Certificate in Business & Administration
- Level 2 NVQ in Business & Administration
- Level 1 NVQ in Business & Administration
- Level 2 BTEC First Certificate in Business
- Level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Business

The following combination of qualifications is recommended by the CfA:



Methodology

In order to evaluate the existing qualification offer, the CfA used the following methodology to gather views from employers and lead partners:

1. Employer Consultation
 - Telephone Interviews
 - Questionnaire
 - Breakfast meetings
2. Lead Partner Consultation
 - E-consultation
 - Breakfast meetings
 - Visits/remote contact
3. Mapping of BTEC qualifications

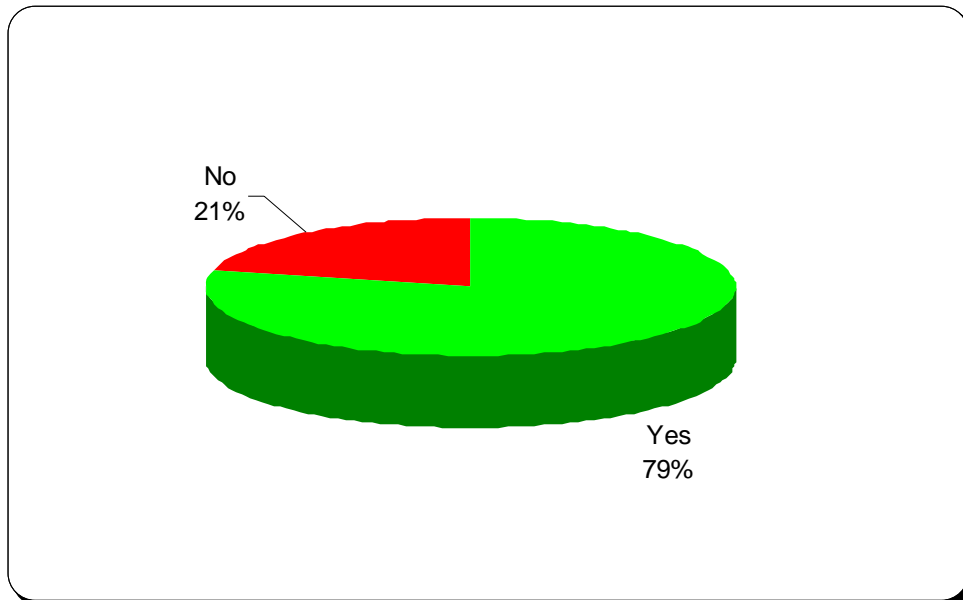
This final report has been broken down into the following key areas for consideration when looking at the relevance and effectiveness of the qualifications on offer to Young Apprenticeship partnerships delivering the Business & Administration programme:

- Are employers satisfied that the skills and knowledge developed through the existing YA qualification offer reflect the needs of the Business & Administration sector and help to bridge the existing skills gaps?
- Do employers feel the existing qualification offer enhances the performance of the Young Apprentice throughout the work placement? Work-based and work-related.
- Are employers satisfied that the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration creates potential employees of the future who are equipped for the work place?
- Is there anything employers and partnerships wish to see added to the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration qualification offer? I.e. content of existing qualifications and/or whole qualifications.

This approach and structure has been adopted to condense all findings from the variety of methods used to collate relevant data to support this evaluation.

Analysis of Findings

Are you familiar with the content of the qualifications your Young Apprentice is studying on the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration?



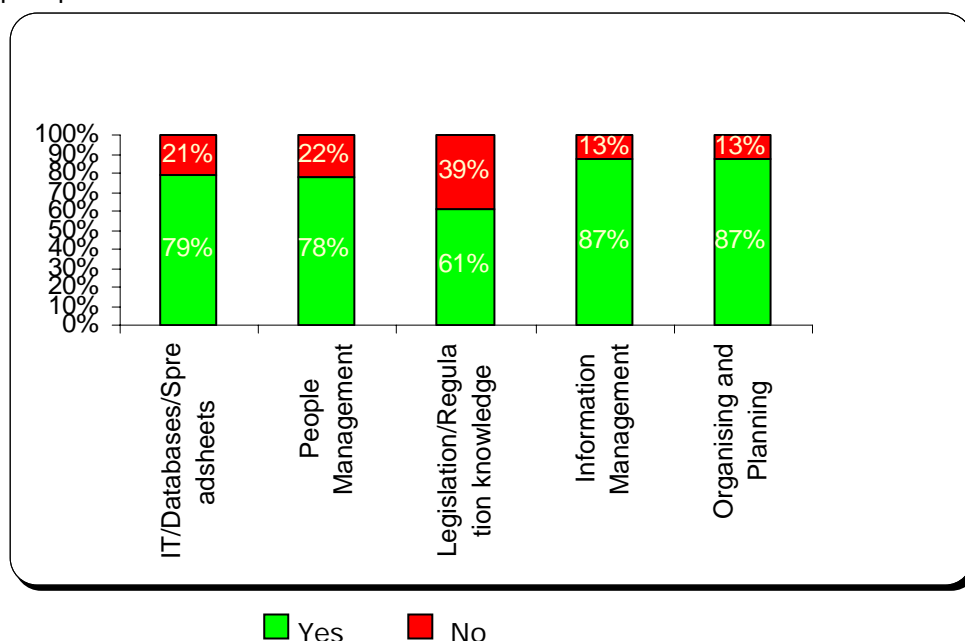
79 % of employers showed good knowledge or familiarity with the qualifications being studied on the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration and this establishes a strong precedent for the remaining focus of this evaluation.

This ensures that a high percentage of employers have been able to make an informed judgement on the relevance and effectiveness of the existing Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration qualification offer throughout this evaluation.

Are employers satisfied that the skills and knowledge developed on the existing YA curriculum reflect the needs of the Business & Administration sector and helps to bridge the existing skills gap?

Subsumed within the Strategic Vision report produced by the CfA in January 2006 are the results from the Skills in Business & Administration Survey 2006, this report identifies the current skills gaps in the Business & Administration sector (Download a full copy of this report at <http://www.cfa.uk.com/research/generalresearch>)

These gaps are identified in the below graph and are from an employer's perspective:



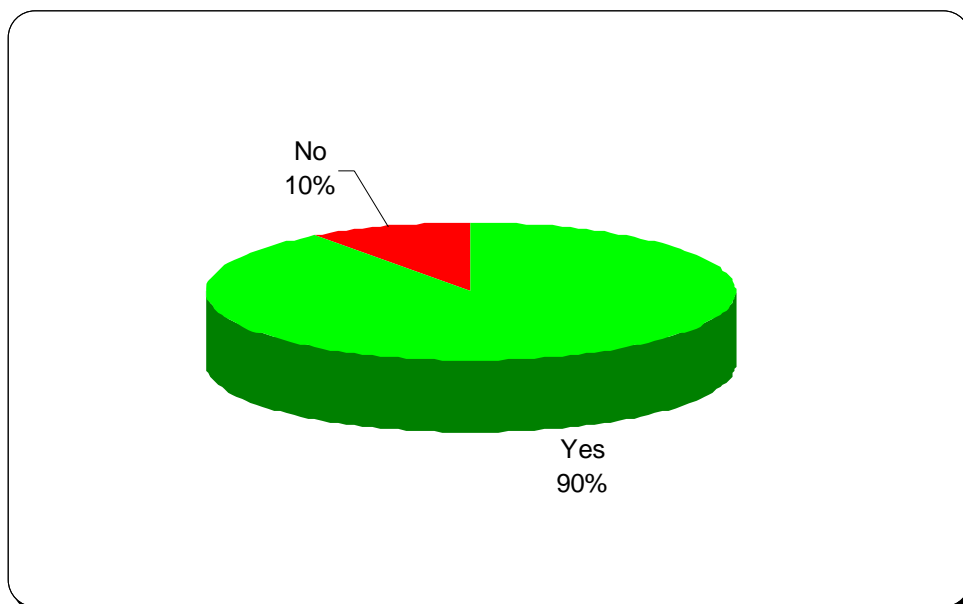
An average of 78% of employers felt that the existing YA curriculum addressed the identified skills gaps in the Business & Administration sector.

Skills and knowledge in these areas are developed through the NVQ at Level 1 & 2 and the Technical certificate in Business & Administration. Aspects of these skills and knowledge are developed through the BTEC. Partnerships must ensure that the delivery of the BTEC qualification is coherent with the work placement to ensure maximum effect. (Please go to page 10 for further detail on the mapping of the BTEC qualifications).

However, for maximum effectiveness the CfA would recommend the combination of the Level 1 or Level 2 NVQ with the Level 2 Technical Certificate. This combination enables a coherent learning experience for the Young Apprentice, where the attainment of knowledge and understanding through the Technical Certificate supports the knowledge and competence required in the NVQ qualifications.

* People Management: Is the ability to work with others at varying hierarchical levels and adjust styles of working accordingly. e.g. CEO and team leader, temporary member of staff etc. This skill is not about managing people but rather managing your relations with people.

Do employers feel that the existing qualifications enhance the performance of the Young Apprentice throughout the work placement?



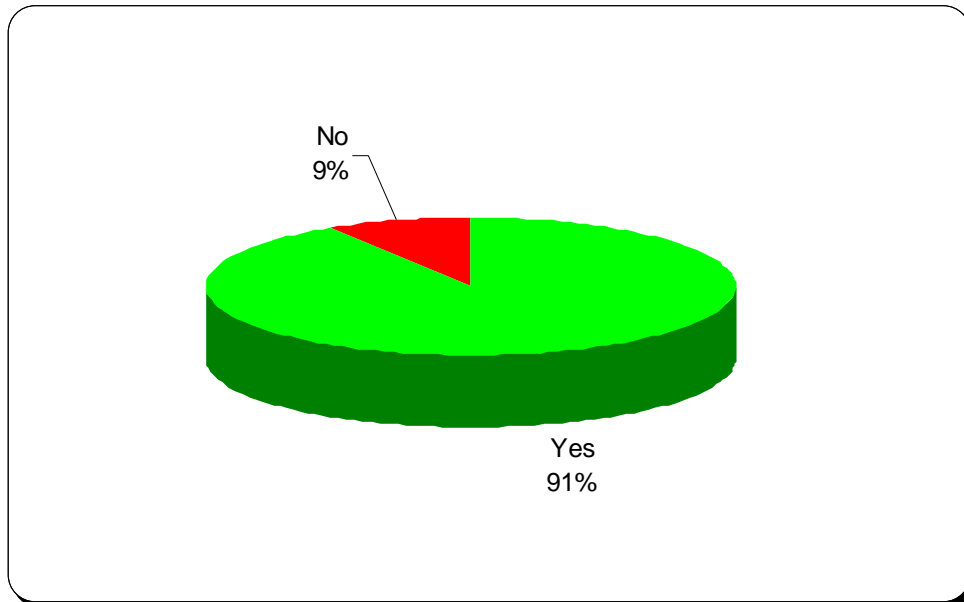
90% of employers felt that the existing qualifications on offer were enhancing the performance of the Young Apprentice throughout the work placement. Under further analysis it was felt that employers particularly valued the NVQ qualifications as they had a direct impact upon the structure and relevance of the work placement

Employers were asked to list the NVQ Level 1 & 2 units by preference and relevance to the type of work they were able to offer their Young Apprentice throughout the placement. The following list reflects this:

1. Carry out your responsibilities at work (Core unit at Level 1 & 2)
2. Work within your business environment (Core Unit at Level 1 & 2)
3. Welcome and deal with visitors (Level 2)
4. Work effectively with other people (Level 2)
5. Handle Mail (Level 1)
6. Use a telephone system (Level 2)
7. Use IT systems (Level 2)
8. Use Word processing software (Level 1 & 2.)
9. Store and retrieve information (Level 1)
10. Operate office equipment (Level 2)
11. Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety (Level 1 & 2)
12. Produce documents (Level 2)
13. Use IT to exchange information (Level 1 & 2.)
14. Use Spreadsheet software (Level 2)
15. Manage diary systems (Level 2)
16. Manage Customer relations (Level 2)
17. Organise and support meetings (Level 2)

Partnerships may wish to consider this list when selecting units and the level of NVQ for their Young Apprentice.

Are employers satisfied that the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration creates potential employees for the future who are equipped for the workplace?



91% of employers felt that the existing Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration creates potential employees of the future.

This is some confirmation that the qualifications currently on offer are fit for purpose. The preparation for work programme combined with the knowledge attained through the Technical Certificate and the competence developed through the NVQ amounts to a holistic learning experience for young people who undertake the YA programme.

Are there any additions employers or partnerships would like to make to the existing YA qualification offer?

The table below shows skills and knowledge which employers felt were under developed throughout the programme and required further emphasis.

No additional qualifications were identified as being necessary. Therefore the table below offers guidance to partnerships for particular emphasis on certain subject areas in the delivery of the existing qualifications.

Additional skills and knowledge	Additional qualification required	Guidance
Commitment to good time-keeping.	No	Look at using the Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) framework (Annex C.) for delivery of some aspects of the Technical certificate and/or the BTEC qualifications. Use activities and techniques that particularly incorporate the skills group entitled 'Self-Managers.'
Self-presentation	No	Look at using the PLTS framework (Annex C.) for delivery of some aspects of the preparation for work programme. Use activities and techniques in delivery that particularly focus on the skill group entitled 'Independent Enquirer.'
Appropriate attitude and/or motivation	No	Look at using the PLTS framework (Annex C.) to support delivery of the preparation for work programme. Use activities and techniques in delivery that particularly focus on the skill groups 'Self-Managers' and Team Workers.'
Communication (Verbal and non-verbal.)	No	Look at using the PLTS framework (Annex C.) to support the delivery of unit 225 of the 'working effectively with other people' in the Level 2 Technical certificate or unit 4 'Business communication' in the BTEC qualifications. Use activities and tasks in delivery that focus on the skills groups 'Team Workers' and 'Effective Participants.'
Security and confidentiality	No	Look at giving context to this area of knowledge in relation to the organisation the Young Apprentice will be placed with. Focus on giving coherence to unit 6 of the BTEC qualification 'introduction to Business Administration' and 202 of the Level 2 Technical certificate 'working in a business environment' with the legislation and regulation relevant to the work placement.

The content of the Edexcel Level 2 BTEC First Certificate & Diploma mapped against the Level 2 CfA Technical Certificate Template

CfA The Level 2 Technical Certificate should assess knowledge and understanding of:	Where found in Level 2 Edexcel BTEC First certificate and Diploma in Business:
<p>Personal Skills</p> <hr/> <p>Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees' legal responsibilities (HASAWA) • Scope and limits of personal responsibility • Maintaining own and others' health and safety 	<p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration</p>
<p>(201) Personal responsibilities at work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Techniques for communicating with others • Techniques for personal development • Importance of personal behaviour: setting and maintaining standards, challenges • Importance of personal behaviour: working with others 	<p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration (techniques for communicating)</p> <p>Unit 5: Employee contribution to working conditions (Only covers personal development aspect)</p>
<p>(202) Working in a business environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights, responsibilities and legislation • Purpose of contracts and personnel procedures • Sources for dealing with grievance and discrimination • Respecting other people • Sources of employment rights information • Role of business and administration within industry • Typical career pathways and sources of career information • Main types of representative bodies and role • Purpose of principles and codes of practice within the sector 	<p>Unit 5: Employee contribution to working conditions</p>

<p>(225) Work effectively with other people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value of working with others • Communication: purposes • Value of team work • Importance of respect for others • Role in developing teams 	<p>Unit 4: Business Communication</p>
<p>(203) Customer relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers (internal/external) • Importance of building effective, efficient customer service and employees' role in developing, role of standards • Principles of dealing with problems and complaints; role of procedures 	<p>Unit 7: Sales and Customer service</p>
<p>Work Skills</p> <hr/> <p>Health and Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe working with people and equipment • To be embedded within, e.g. units 202, 206, 211, 212 – 218, 219, 220 	<p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration</p>
<p>(201) Responsibilities at work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of effective communication • Handling information: clarifying, locating, selecting, • Presenting information: structuring • Techniques for planning work • Techniques for monitoring work • Purpose of guidelines: procedures 	<p>Unit 4: Business Communication</p>
<p>(202) Working in a business environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different sectors in business and administration • Personal responsibilities: individual role in an organisational structure; • Personal responsibilities: impact of procedures, systems, regulations, legislation on work • Personal responsibilities: security, types and role of guidelines in organisations 	<p>Unit 5: Employee contribution to working conditions</p>

<p>(203) Customer relations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Techniques: identification, confirmation, agreeing timescales and standards 	<p>Unit 2 Exploring Key Business Pressures (Customer expectations)</p> <p>Unit 7: Sales and Customer Service</p>
<p>(204) Diary systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purpose and types of systems - appropriateness, Information needed Prioritisation: importance and techniques Techniques for communication and security 	<p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration</p>
<p>(205) Organising travel and accommodation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Types, sources of information, role of procedures, Information needed Problems, techniques to resolve Purposes of records and evaluation 	<p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration</p>
<p>(206) Dealing with visitors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance and role of receptionist Types of visitor and needs Purpose of communication and security when dealing with visitors 	<p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration</p>
<p>(207) Process financial information (208) Operate credit control procedures)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sources of financial information Types and role of procedures: for customers, limits to authority, Importance of security, data protection 	<p>Unit 3 Investigating Financial control</p>
<p>(210) Research and report information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Techniques for finding information Types of information and sources Good practice in presenting information, appropriateness of formats 	<p>Unit 4 Business Communication (Only covers the reporting aspect)</p> <p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration</p>

<p>(211) Organise and support meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of meetings • Techniques for setting up meetings • Types of information needed: set up, at meeting, after meeting • Purpose of records: content, accuracy 	<p>Unit 4 Business Communications</p>
<p>(212) Use IT systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common types of hardware and storage media • Risks and hazards: to self, to others, guidelines and regulations, minimising • Potential risks to data: people, hardware and software • External risks • Sources of information and advice 	<p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration</p>
<p>(213) IT to exchange information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposes of e-mail • Resources and limitations • Principles for dealing with: unknown senders, unwanted mail, viruses • Security • Laws and guidelines 	<p>Unit 6: Introduction to Business Administration</p>
<p>(214 -218) Using software</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of software and their suitability for purpose: type of information • User needs: agreeing, clarifying • Importance of file management: creating, handling, organising, saving • Importance of accuracy: techniques 	<p>No Coverage</p>

<p>(221-224) Producing text and documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different types of documents and sources • Importance of agreeing: purpose, format, quality standards, deadlines • Importance of security and data protection • Reasons for high quality, attractive documents 	<p>Unit 4 Business Communications</p>
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The structure for the Level 2 BTEC First Certificate and Diploma in Business are:

<p>Level 2 BTEC First Certificate in Business structure is one core unit and two specialist units</p>	
<p>Unit no.</p>	<p>Core Unit</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Exploring Key Business pressures</p>
<p>Unit no.</p>	<p>Specialist Units</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Business Communication</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Introduction to Business Communication</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Sales and Customer Service</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Business Online</p>

<p>Level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Business structure is three core units and three specialist units</p>	
<p>Unit no.</p>	<p>Core Units</p>
<p>1</p>	<p>Introduction to business activity</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Exploring key business pressures</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Investigating Financial control</p>
<p>Unit no.</p>	<p>Specialist Units</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Business Communication</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Employee contribution to the working conditions</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Introduction to Business Administration</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Sales and Customer service</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Business Online</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Starting up a new business</p>

Taking in to account the structures as detailed above, the mapping exercise has revealed that the BTEC First Diploma in Business has around 80% of coverage for the Technical certificate and as a result the CfA will accept this qualification as a proxy to the Technical certificate should the Young Apprentice decide to progress to the Level 2 Apprenticeship in Business & Administration.

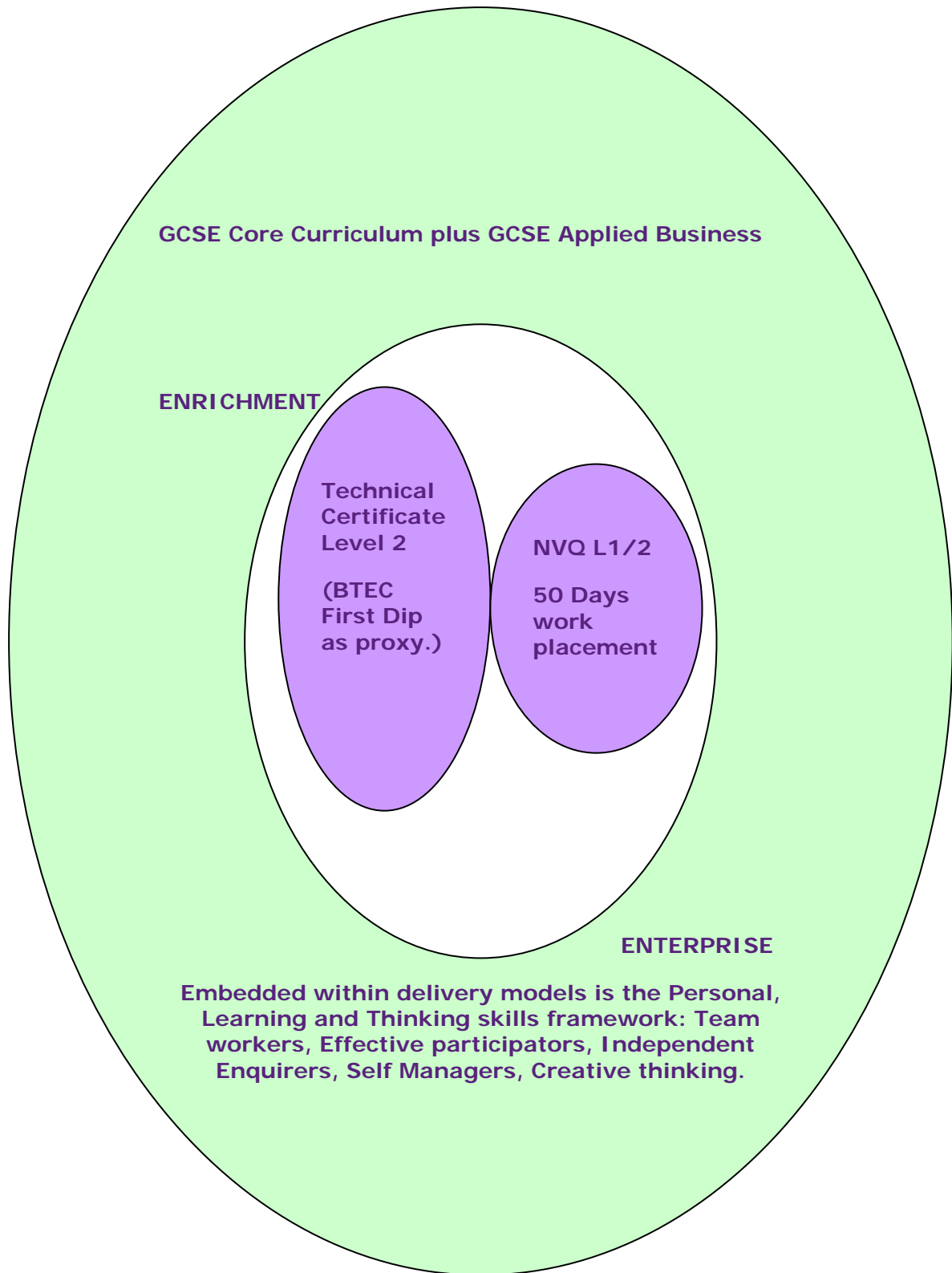
Due to the restrictions of the structure for the BTEC First certificate in Business the mapping has revealed that there is a 50-60% coverage for any one combination of the units and consequently is not sufficient coverage to be accepted as a proxy.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- The Level 2 BTEC First Certificate in Business will be removed from the current qualification offer due to poor coverage against the technical certificate template. This consequently confirms that it does not develop enough knowledge around areas that are deemed essential to employers.
- Partnerships should be encouraged to deliver the NVQ L1 & L2 in sequence of each other so that young learners achieve both qualifications and experience a progression of learning. However the choice will still remain as it is expected that the Level 2 Technical certificate should be the main qualification of the offer.
- The CfA will work with partnerships to embed the Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills framework into the delivery of the qualifications on offer.
- The Level 2 BTEC First Diploma in Business will act as a proxy qualification to the Level 2 Technical certificate, so long as the following combination of specialist units are selected:
 - Unit 4 Business Communications
 - Unit 5 Employee Contribution to the working conditions
 - Unit 6 Introduction to Business Administration

This will ensure that those young people who take the BTEC First Diploma have the option to take the fast track progression route to the Level 2 post-16 Apprenticeship in Business & Administration. This recommendation is subject to agreement from awarding bodies, QCA and LSC.

Revised model for the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration programme



Annex A – Questionnaire

Topics covered in school based qualification

Please indicate if you think that a knowledge topic needs to be covered further. If yes, then please specify what content is missing:

Yes

<p>Health and Safety Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees' legal responsibilities (HASAWA) • Scope and limits of personal responsibility • Maintaining own and others' health and safety • Safe working with people and equipment 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Missing Knowledge area </p>
<p>(201) Personal responsibilities at work Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Techniques for communicating with others • Techniques for personal development • Importance of personal behaviour: setting and maintaining standards, challenges • Importance of personal behaviour: working with others • Handling information: clarifying, locating, selecting, • Presenting information: structuring • Techniques for planning work • Techniques for monitoring work • Purpose of guidelines: procedures 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Missing Knowledge area </p>
<p>(202) Working in a business environment Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights, responsibilities and legislation • Purpose of contracts and personnel procedures • Sources for dealing with grievance and discrimination • Respecting other people • Sources of employment rights information • Role of business and administration within industry • Typical career pathways and sources of career information • Main types of representative bodies and role • Purpose of principles and codes of practice within the sector • Different sectors in business and administration • Personal responsibilities: individual role in an organisational structure; • Personal responsibilities: impact of procedures, systems, regulations, legislation on work • Personal responsibilities: security, types and role of guidelines in organisations 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Missing Knowledge area </p>
<p>(225) Work effectively with other people Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Value of working with others • Communication: purposes • Value of team work • Importance of respect for others • Role in developing teams 	<p>Missing Knowledge area</p>

<p>(204) Diary systems Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose and types of systems – appropriateness, • Information needed • Prioritisation: importance and techniques • Techniques for communication and security 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Missing Knowledge area </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>
<p>(205) Organising travel and accommodation Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types, sources of information, role of procedures, • Information needed • Problems, techniques to resolve • Purposes of records and evaluation 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Missing knowledge area </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>
<p>(206) Dealing with visitors Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance and role of receptionist • Types of visitor and needs • Purpose of communication and security when dealing with visitors 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Missing Knowledge area </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<p>(207) Process financial information (208) Operate credit control procedures) Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources of financial information • Types and role of procedures: for customers, limits to authority, • Importance of security, data protection 	<p>Missing knowledge area </p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Missing knowledge area </p>
<p>(210) Research and report information Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Techniques for finding information • Types of information and sources • Good practice in presenting information, appropriateness of formats 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Missing knowledge area</p>
<p>214 -218) Using software Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of software and their suitability for purpose: type of information • User needs: agreeing, clarifying • Importance of file management: creating, handling, organising, saving • Importance of accuracy: techniques 	

(219) Use a telephone system
Content:

- Types of telephone system
- Purpose of procedures
- Information handling: before call, from call, transferring calls, to callers
- Importance of security

- Yes
- No
- Missing knowledge area

(220) Operate office equipment
Content:

- Different types and their suitability for purpose
- Purpose of instructions: efficiency, faults, safety
- Principles of handling equipment: managing waste, cleanliness, other users

- Yes
- No
- Missing knowledge area

(221 – 224) Producing text and documents
Content:

- Different types of documents and sources
- Importance of agreeing: purpose, format, quality standards, deadlines
- Importance of safe storage of text
- Importance of security and data protection
- Reasons for high quality, attractive documents

- Yes
- No
- Missing knowledge area

(221 – 224) Producing text and documents
Content:

- Different types of documents and sources
- Importance of agreeing: purpose, format, quality standards, deadlines
- Importance of safe storage of text
- Importance of security and data protection
- Reasons for high quality, attractive documents

- Yes
- No
- Missing knowledge area

(212) Use IT systems
Content:

- Common types of hardware and storage media
- Risks and hazards: to self, to others, guidelines and regulations, minimising
- Potential risks to data: people, hardware and software
- External risks
- Sources of information and advice

- Yes
- No
- Missing knowledge area

(213) IT to exchange information
Content:

- Purposes of e-mail
- Resources and limitations
- Principles for dealing with: unknown senders, unwanted mail, viruses
- Security
- Laws and guidelines

- Yes
- No
- Missing knowledge area

Skills development

From the following list please state which 10 skill areas you feel need to be covered throughout the Young Apprenticeship programme. Please number them in order of preference.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Welcome and deal with visitors | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Handle Mail | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Store and retrieve information | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use IT to exchange information | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ensure your own actions reduce risks to health and safety | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Manage Customer relations | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Manage diary systems | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Organise and support meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use IT systems | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use IT to exchange information | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use Word processing software | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use Spreadsheet software | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use Database software | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use Presentation software | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use Specialist and bespoke software | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use a telephone system | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Operate office equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prepare text from notes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prepare text from shorthand | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Prepare text from recorded audio instructions | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Produce documents | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Work effectively with other people | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Annex B – Minutes from meetings

Young Apprenticeship in Business Administration

Employer Breakfast meeting Worcester

25th September 2006-09-26

Present:

Gerry Denston	CfA
Stephen Poole	Worcester College of Arts and Technology
Cherry Brookes	Worcester Group Training
Julie Parsons	Proffitt Parsons Communications
Carys Ingham	Team Manager, Connexions Worcester
Stacey Shuttleworth	Malver Hills District Council
Elaine Elliot	Malvern Hills District Council

Welcome and introduction
Context of meeting.

- Gerry Denston explained his role with CfA in the region and related to other YA partnerships that he has visited and had some involvement with. He put the YA programme into context of 14 to 19 developments and explained how this programme differed from others and what the future might be in the light of the evolving specialised diplomas.
- The employers were keen to talk about their very positive experiences with the learners during the first year of the programme. The Worcester Partnership began with cohort 2 and so haven't had a group complete yet. All the employers have had very positive experiences.
- Malvern Hills District Council has four on placement, Proffitt Parsons has one (the company only has 4 employees) and Worcester Connexions has one. It was unfortunate that someone from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Worcester could not attend, they sent their apologies, as they have a learner who is Italian by birth and speaks the language fluently. His placement has coincided with the Chamber having regular contacts with Italy and since no one else could speak Italian the learner has become their chief person for dealing with their clients and contacts.
- Discussion initially centred around the difficulty in accommodating the programme created by the schools' inability to agree a common timetable, and make sufficient time available in the curriculum. This affected the learners in different ways, for example they were not always able to turn

up at their placement in civies. "They want to dress like grown up as they are working in a grown-up environment" one said. "Katie likes to wear a blouse and smart trousers whilst Tom also prefers to wear his formal clothes rather than school uniform." "Sympathetic employees build up their confidence by making encouraging remarks about the way they dress."

- A key question was how much time did the learners receive developing their employment skills prior to the placement. Appearance, they don't all fit the comments above, time keeping, attitude, company policies such as use of mobile phones and email, etc. Cherry Brookes responded that they do get some induction from both the FE college and the WBLP. Everyone agreed that it was a difficult balancing act, and different for every learner. Too strict and it becomes like school, too liberal and they risk losing their placement. Colleagues from MHDC had observed that when their 4 learners were working in separate departments they were fine but when they came together they reverted to typical school type behaviour and like most young people would test the boundaries! One employer felt it was the initial visit that set the level for the placement, this was crucial she said.
- Being able to interview prior to placement was also necessary as the learners begin to understand that they have to compete in life and sometimes don't always get their first choice and therefore value placements more.
- Another employer thought that it was good that these young people had these options however another was concerned about the qualifications being offered and the quality of placements. NVQ and Technical Certificate aside, one said that it was essential that the quality of the placement should be such as to offset their time out of school, that is it should offer something if not better than of equal value and of more beneficial to them.
- Most were concerned that the Level 1 NVQ was not appropriate. All the employers agreed that L2 for their learners would be better, it would be more motivating and that the opportunities they offered were at level 2 rather than level 1.
- Schools came in for some criticism. The TT has already been mentioned and some thought that the psychology of schools was that once the learners were on placement they were no longer their concern. Most said that schools were very difficult to contact at any time of the day. MHDC had had no contact with the schools at all. There was also an agreement to my suggestion that partners should draw up a 5 term plan with all relevant dates included so that everyone knew what was happening and when.
- Everyone was happy with the level of functional skills that the learners brought into the workplace, however, the one difficult skill that they all struggle with is portfolio building. Cherry Brookes spoke about how and when she introduces this to the learners. There are no short cuts, perhaps providing a dummy portfolio would help, it's something that she introduces slowly. However, the employers recognised that those who themselves had employees doing NVQs could perhaps offer some advice and guidance if the learner needed it between visits from the assessor.

- Finally, there was some concern expressed for the learners and what they are being asked to do at such a young age. The range of experiences, qualifications and other demands made on them is large and complex. One employer, quoting her learner said that he had told her his mates thought they had the easy option staying in school. The number of GCSEs, the coursework, the catching up, working in a new and different environment with adults, new rules and regulations, two new qualifications each with different assessment systems all had to be taken into consideration. The employers thought their learners had done extremely well to cope with all this.

Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration

Employer Breakfast meeting - London

23/06/2006

Minutes

Chaired by Richard Thompson at CfA

Present

Cheryl Jones – Ladybird Day Nursery/Ladyworld employment agency
Katie Couchman – Skillsactive
Cathy Hall – NACRO
Sarah Thurman – Hyde Housing
Marva Trenton – Lambeth Family Link
Heather Bellis – CfA
Nishta Naik – CfA
Vic Ashley – CfA Regional co-ordinator

- Welcome and introductions given.
- Context of the meeting.
- Richard Thompson explained to the group that the purpose of this meeting was to identify skills, knowledge and/or behaviours and attitudes which employers feel need to be addressed in the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration. This would be part of a bigger process to re-evaluate the current YA offer in this sector. It was also clarified that there would be further breakfast meetings occurring in the middle of the country and the north so that a spread of opinion was gathered. These regional meetings would be facilitated by the CfA regional co-ordinators; Vic Ashley and Gerry Denston.
- Open Discussion around skills, knowledge and/or behaviours and attitudes.
- Most areas identified were about enriching the preparation for work period of the programme between September – December prior to placements beginning. Employers identified some areas where this could be improved to create a placement ready Young Apprentice.
- Areas identified in prep for work period:
- Communication on a verbal level: The point was made that communication skills upon arrival in placement were not particularly strong. More investigation in to the prep for work programmes was needed, we may find that more emphasis is needed on this area prior to placements beginning. The worth of devising a communication programme that can be rolled out to partnerships to include within their prep for work programme was discussed.
- Unfamiliarity with the workplace and lack of application of rights and responsibilities in placements: Taster session were discussed. Whereby, young people may go in for a half day session in pairs to test the unfamiliar surroundings with support from a peer. During this taster session it was suggested that employers explain and re-iterate the learning about rights and responsibilities in the workplace in the context of their organisation, so that a distinction is made between the way you act in school and the way you act in the workplace. This way the young person can see the theory in an applied context and understand the repercussions of adhering or not adhering to their rights and responsibilities in the workplace.

- **Assessment in the workplace:** It was identified by some employers that assessment of the Young Apprentice in their NVQ was driving the tasks that were being given. The consequence of this was that tasks were having to be simulated in order to create evidence which is not best practice at all. It was discussed that evidence should naturally fall out the work given to the Young Apprentice by the employer and that units should be selected based on the type of activities and tasks the employer needs to be done. This maintains the ethos of a 'real experience' and will inevitably be a more valuable experience for the young person and the employer. The CfA have worked closely already with a consultant on developing a best practice model for assessment specifically for the Young Apprenticeship and this will be rolled out to partnerships in due course.
- **Friday as a placement day:** The issue was raised that using Friday as a placement day did not always reflect truly on the organisation, often they are dress down days and there is a less dedicated attitude amongst staff. It was suggested that if the schools timetable permitted this Fridays should be avoided.
- **AOB**
- **Close –** Meeting was assured that they would receive a copy of minutes from the meetings and would be included within any further consultation around this area.

Annex C – Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills

Independent enquirer

Focus:

Young people process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They take informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes.

Young people:

- identify questions to answer and problems to resolve
- plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions
- explore issues, events or problems from different perspectives
- analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value
- consider the influence of circumstances, beliefs and feelings on decisions and events
- support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence

Creative thinkers

Focus:

Young people think creatively by generating and exploring ideas, making original connections. They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value.

Young people:

- generate ideas and explore possibilities
- ask questions to extend their thinking
- connect own and others' ideas and experiences in inventive ways
- question own and others' assumptions
- try out alternatives or new solutions and follow ideas through
- adapt ideas as circumstances change

Reflective learners

Focus:

Young people evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning.

Young people:

- assess themselves and others, identifying opportunities and achievements
- set goals with success criteria for their development and work
- review progress, acting on the outcomes
- invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism
- evaluate experiences and learning to inform future progress
- communicate their learning in relevant ways for different audiences

Team workers

Focus:

Young people work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to and take account of different views. They form trusting relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes.

Young people:

- co-operate with others to work towards common goals
- reach agreements, managing discussions to achieve results
- adapt behaviour to suit different roles and situations
- show fairness and consideration to others
- take responsibility, showing confidence in themselves and their contribution
- provide constructive support and feedback to others

Self-managers

Focus:

Young people organise themselves, showing personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self-improvement. They actively embrace change, responding positively to new priorities, coping with challenges and looking for opportunities.

Young people:

- seek out challenges or new responsibilities and show flexibility when priorities change
- work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance
- organise time and resources, prioritising actions
- anticipate, take and manage risks
- deal with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands
- respond positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed

Effective participators

Focus:

Young people actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves.

Young people:

discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed

present a persuasive case for action

propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps

identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves

try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions

act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own