

Contents

Introduction	2
Chapter 1 Rationale for the 14-19 Prospectus and Common Application Process	4
Chapter 2 Minimum standards of service for young people	8
Chapter 3 14-19 Prospectus – progress and next steps	17
Chapter 4 Common Application Process – progress and next steps	23
Chapter 5 Enabling 14-19 Partnerships to lead change and drive progress	36

Introduction

Our aim is to make this the best country in the world for children and young people to grow up. In 2007, we published the first ever *Children's Plan*¹ to put the needs of children, young people and their parents or carers at the centre of everything we do. We are committed to ensuring that all young people reach adulthood equipped to thrive as citizens in the global economy. To this end, through our 14-19 reforms, we have embarked on a transformation of services and expansion of opportunities for young people.

*Delivering 14-19 Reform: Next Steps*² set out progress to date in delivering these reforms and set the direction for the next phase of delivery. The 14-19 reforms will:

- ensure that all young people participate, until at least their 18th birthday, in education and training that stretches and challenges them to achieve their potential and go on to further or higher education or skilled employment;
- give young people the knowledge and skills that employers and the economy need to prosper in the 21st century; and
- close the achievement gap so that all have an equal opportunity to succeed, irrespective of gender, race, disability or background.

In delivering the 14-19 reforms, we need to move to a system that is responsive to young people's needs. Young people should have genuine choice and be engaged in their learning in order to achieve their potential and progress. Young people should be provided with high quality impartial information, advice and guidance, including being able to find out online what opportunities are on offer to them. They should also be able to apply for these opportunities through the same online resource.

1 The Children's Plan available for download from – www.dcsf.gov.uk/childrensplan/

2 Delivering 14-19 Reform: Next Steps available for download from <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=26>

This document sets out the Government's ambition to 2013 for further development of the 14-19 Prospectus and implementation of the Common Application Process. It also describes the support we will offer local areas to help make this ambition a reality.

This document is intended for **14-19 Partnerships** and those organisations represented within the partnership, particularly local authorities, which will be responsible for the delivery of the developments set out in this plan. It will also be of interest to:

- **IAG practitioners** in local Connexions services;
- **schools** – senior managers, careers coordinators, curriculum managers, pastoral, managers and form tutors;
- **colleges** – senior managers, student support staff and admissions officers;
- **training providers**; and
- **other 14-19 learning providers.**

Chapter 1: Rationale for the 14-19 Prospectus and Common Application Process

The 14-19 Prospectus and the Common Application Process (CAP) are critical in bringing the benefits of the 14-19 reforms to young people by providing information to inform and drive choice and enabling a more responsive, customer-focused system.

What is in a 14-19 Prospectus?

- A user friendly, fully searchable directory of education and training available in the area at entry level through to level 3
- Labour market information for the area
- Information about course quality
- Feedback about courses from students who have previously taken them
- Information about progression routes from courses
- Details about how to get in touch with information, advice and guidance (IAG) practitioners who can offer support
- Information about financial support and transport
- The opportunity to apply for courses online through the CAP
- The opportunity to develop an individual learning plan linked to the 14-19 Prospectus

What is the Common Application Process?

- It will be one process through which all young people can apply for education and training opportunities so that they no longer have to navigate different applications process for different opportunities
- Young people will be able to use it to apply for education and training courses from entry level through to level 3, namely Apprenticeships, the Diploma, progression pathways within the Foundation Learning Tier and General Qualifications (GCSEs and A Levels)
- It will be linked to the on-line national Apprenticeship vacancy matching system
- Young people who have not applied for education or training or received an offer of a place can be offered support and advice from specialist IAG professionals

The 14-19 Prospectus will ensure that all young people have access to impartial information about local education and training opportunities.

There is considerable evidence from Ofsted that some schools, notably those with sixth forms, do not always give impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG) on 14-19 options. This is sometimes because institutional needs (for example, to retain pupils) can take priority over the provision of impartial IAG or simply because those offering IAG are not up to date with the options available. We have legislated in the Education and Skills Act 2008 to place a new duty on schools to provide impartial careers education. This duty will commence in autumn 2009 and we will publish guidance to support implementation. The 14-19 Prospectus is important in ensuring that staff in schools, colleges and other learning providers have the information they need to communicate the local 14-19 offer and in ensuring this information is freely available to young people and their parents or carers. It will also be a tool for the Intergrated Youth Support Service, in each local authority, to help support vulnerable young people to access the curriculum offer.

The 14-19 Prospectus will provide young people with information about the qualification pathways they can follow. *Promoting achievement, valuing success: a strategy for 14-19 qualifications* set out the main pathways that will be available to young people in the future – namely Apprenticeships, Diplomas, the Foundation Learning Tier and General Qualifications (GCSEs and A levels).

- Apprenticeships will become a mainstream option for 16-18 year olds and there will be an entitlement to an Apprenticeship place for each suitably qualified young person from 2013. The Government anticipates that around one in five of all young people will be undertaking an Apprenticeship by 2020.
- Diplomas will increasingly become available to young people, with every 14 year old entitled to choose one of the first 14 Diplomas and every 16 to 18 year old entitled to choose any of the first 17 lines by 2013.
- The Foundation Learning Tier was introduced to provide accredited qualifications for young people working at entry level and level 1 to prepare them fully for level 2.

- GCSEs and A levels will be reformed and strengthened to ensure that content is up to date and engaging. From September 2008, young people started studying A levels which incorporate increased stretch and challenge.

At this time of change, it is particularly important that the 14-19 Prospectus informs young people about the opportunities available to them and they have information about progression through these pathways.

The 14-19 Prospectus will offer complete information to help young people stay on as we raise the participation age. From 2013, all 17 year olds will be required to participate in education and training and from 2015, all young people will have a responsibility to participate in education or training to their 18th birthday. The 14-19 Prospectus will contain comprehensive information about what young people can stay on to do and the support available to help them stay on.

The CAP, connected to the 14-19 Prospectus, will give 14-19 Partnerships a mechanism for ensuring that every young person has the offer of a suitable education or training place and gets the right support at the right time. We remain committed to reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and ensuring that all 16 and 17 year olds have a suitable offer of a place in education or training by September of each academic year (the September Guarantee). At present, local Connexions Personal Advisers and school staff rely on their contact with young people to determine which young people need support in thinking through their options, making applications for courses or gaining a suitable offer. This works well for many young people but some can miss out. This can result in young people starting on the wrong course and dropping out – one of the biggest contributors to the number of young people who become NEET each academic year – or not applying to courses at all.

The CAP will allow 14-19 Partnerships, local Connexions services and learning providers to develop a more intelligent system for targeting support to ensure that young people get the right support, at the right time. It will enable delivery of the September Guarantee and support in achieving our goal of all young people participating in learning until their 18th birthday.

Together, the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP have the potential to provide useful management information to Local Authorities and 14-19 Partnerships, sub regional groupings and to learning providers.

From 2010, subject to legislation being passed, local authorities will take on the responsibility for commissioning and funding education and training provision for 16-19 year olds. Management information from the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP on the local, sub-regional and regional offer will increasingly be able to inform these commissioning arrangements. Collaboration on the implementation of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP between local authorities will contribute to successful sub-regional commissioning arrangements.

Chapter 2: Minimum standards of service for young people

This chapter aims to set out the minimum standards we want all 14-19 Prospectuses to meet.

Chapter 1 demonstrated the real potential of the 14-19 Prospectus and Common Application Process to develop into powerful tools for young people and their parents or carers as well as the practitioners who work to support them. There has been significant innovation across the country in developing the 14-19 Prospectus. We want to ensure that young people get the best service from their 14-19 Prospectus regardless of where they live.

Young people's first choice for information on 14-19 learning opportunities

Young people need to be able to plan their learning journey, understanding what is on offer at each stage and how to access it. The 14-19 Prospectus should be a user-friendly, searchable, and complete directory of the local education and training opportunities available to young people aged 14-19 from entry level through to level 3.

In addition to basic course-related information, the 14-19 Prospectus will provide information on the four main qualification pathways available to young people and provide links to national sources of information, including the Diploma pages on DirectGov, the national Apprenticeships website and Connexions Direct.

The 14-19 Prospectus will need to be engaging, attractive and easy to navigate to hold young people's attention, and compete with other popular websites. In order to ensure that the 14-19 Prospectus is customer-focused, young people should be involved in the design and evaluation of the 14-19 Prospectus.

Engagement of young people in the development of Salford's 14-19 Prospectus

'We consulted with a focus group of young people aged between 14 and 19 to find out what they wanted on the website and how it should look. The young people involved in the consultation process feel a sense of ownership towards the site and we have benefited by gaining a much better understanding of what young people want and need in a website. Involving young people has also helped us to promote the website by word of mouth.'

'In 2009, we will be working with local students who are studying for the new Diploma in Creative and Media, to design their own web pages for the 14-19 Prospectus and to add their own news stories. We have already started a 'Diploma Diary' which will report on the Diploma activity days. This features multiple students from participating schools in the city.'

Jack Loughlin, Salford Local Authority

There should be a powerful search facility to enable young people to find what they are looking for on the 14-19 Prospectus. They will be able to save course searches to return to at a later date, see trends in their searches and increasingly the search facility will enable the 14-19 Prospectus to be responsive to young people's interests. Young people can already search neighbouring 14-19 Prospectuses but with the right developments, one search will allow them to explore opportunities across a wider geographical area.

The 14-19 Prospectus should be introduced to young people in year 9 as an integral part of a Careers Education and Guidance Programme. Many areas are introducing young people to the 14-19 Prospectus much earlier than year 9, as a resource for researching the options that will be available to them.

Introducing young people to the 14-19 Prospectus in school Careers Education, Information Advice, and Guidance programmes

In Devon, a series of practitioner lesson plans were designed to support the introduction of the 14-19 Prospectus to all learners across all providers in the County. The lesson plans are aimed at years 9, 10 and 11 and incorporate a navigation task to facilitate use of the site and extension tasks to develop young people's skills in researching future options and choices. The plans are mapped against the Learning Outcomes of the National Framework for CEG 11-19.

Lesson objectives include:

- a) Extracting and considering a variety of future career and course options (including Apprenticeships and Diplomas);
- b) Identifying potential 14-19 progression routes (including Higher Education); and
- c) Weighing up and making sound value judgements regarding future course/ career choices.

Jeremy Cloke, 14-19 IAG Consultant (Devon)

Christina Maccullie, Area Prospectus Project Manager (Devon and Torbay)

In order for the 14-19 Prospectus to be young people's first choice for information, it should be promoted locally, and data on usage of the site should be monitored to inform the marketing approach and development of the site. Feedback should be sought from young people and they should be able to post or provide feedback on the quality of the site or on gaps in education and training provision.

Information and support to help make informed choices

14-19 Prospectuses should provide young people with a range of information, integrated with basic and user-friendly, course-related information to help them make informed choices:

- **Information about local delivery arrangements for particular courses** – For example, information about how Diplomas will be delivered across different institutions within a Consortium.
- **Information about progression routes** – From education or training courses into FE, HE or careers to enable pathway planning. This should include tools to enable young people to determine what routes would suit them.

- **Labour Market Information** – 14-19 Prospectuses should make national LMI available to young people by linking to the Jobs4u database on the Connexions Direct website. The content of this site is regularly updated, taking into account young people’s comments and feedback. Local and regional LMI from the Sector Skills Councils and others may also be drawn upon to supplement this information.
- **Case studies or ‘talking heads’ to raise aspirations and challenge stereotypes** – This should communicate the experience of other young people from diverse backgrounds who have undertaken different education and training opportunities.
- **Information about quality of provision** – To start with this will mean making inspection reports accessible from course entries on the 14-19 Prospectus. As inspection reports are not young people friendly it is our aspiration to make information about quality more accessible and detailed, for example at course level.
- **Information about financial support** – Basic information should be provided through the website about the financial support available to young people, linking to DirectGov for more detailed information.
- **Transport arrangements and financial assistance with transport** – There should be a link to the local authority post-16 transport policy statement and information about transport to other sites of learning within Consortia should be made available.

In making this information available through the 14-19 Prospectus, the site should not recreate material that is already provided on national websites. Information on the Connexions Direct and Jobs4u sites is regularly updated, and Prospectus providers can use the content (acknowledging the source) or create links, to ensure consistency of information provision.

Online information is no substitute for face to face support from an information, advice and guidance professional. The 14-19 Prospectus should enable young people to get in touch with their Personal Adviser in the local Connexions service as and when they need additional support.

Accessible to all

The 14-19 Prospectus should be accessible to all young people, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). It is important that learners with LDD are included in the design and evaluation of 14-19 Prospectus websites and know who they should contact to help them navigate the site. All 14-19 Prospectuses should comply with accessibility standards.

In particular, consideration should be given to:

- The simplification of language and a focus on readability (for example, SMOG (simplified measure of gobbledygook), a formula that gives a readability level for written material);
- Paper-based alternatives for learners who have difficulty with online applications;
- The ability for online applications to be made without use of a mouse;
- The avoidance of java script to prevent interference with a standard screen-reader;
- Minimal use of pop-ups;
- Options to change background colour and enlarge font size; and
- The ability to use technological and adaptive software approaches (for example, PECS, Widgit literacy symbols, Makaton, Supernova, JAWS, Dragon, avatars and video clips).

It is important to note that while most young people with LDD will access education and training in their local area, there will still be a number of learners who will need to access provision across a wider area, including through national providers. Links will need to be made to neighbouring and other 14-19 Prospectuses.

Some areas are ensuring that their 14-19 Prospectus is accessible to learners with LDD while others have chosen to develop a specific solution to meet LDD learners' needs.

Norfolk's Prospectus for Young People with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

'Young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) were identified as a key target audience for Norfolk's 14–19 Prospectus, as many of these young people are unable to access course information in existing paper formats.

'Before consulting young people with LDD, we created a prototype of an LDD-adapted Prospectus to use as a starting point for the consultations. We worked with Connexions Personal Advisers (PAs) with an LDD specialism to understand our target audience's needs and levels of ability, and then used their ideas as the basis of the prototype.

The consultations with young people with LDD were organised through teachers at special schools and FE colleges. We consulted with small groups of young people with moderate and severe learning difficulties (separate groups for different levels of need). The sessions were co-delivered by the school's/college's LDD PA, with some assistance from teaching assistants. We focused on what the young people liked and disliked about the prototype and which features they did not understand. Based on the results of each session, the prototype was developed further and each new version has been presented to a new group of young people.

We plan to launch the Prospectus for young people with LDD in 2009.'

Chris Barnes, Norfolk Connexions

Apply for opportunities online

From 2011, our expectation is that young people in year 11 should be able to apply for courses online through a Common Application Process (CAP). It will be one process through which all young people can apply for education and training opportunities so that they no longer have to navigate different application processes for different opportunities. This includes the ability for young people to apply for an Apprenticeship through alignment between local CAPs and the Apprenticeship vacancy matching system.

Young people will be able to track the progress of their applications and receive offers through the system. The CAP will need to facilitate existing admissions processes to courses, not replace these. Eventually we want the Common Application Process to be in place for the 14-19 age range.

Develop an ongoing record of learning and development online

Young people aged 14-19 should have the opportunity to develop an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). ILPs enable young people to record their learning goals, achievements and aspirations in a living record and can be linked to the 14-19 Prospectus. Any development should take account of the ILPs already in use in institutions or being developed through existing learning platforms. Further details of our expectations on ILPs will be set out in the IAG Strategy which will be published in 2009.

A tool for those who support young people

The 14-19 Prospectus and CAP will also be an important tool for:

- IAG Practitioners;
- Schools;
- Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges and Work Based Learning providers;
- Consortia; and
- 14-19 Partnerships and Local Authorities.

The benefits of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP to these specific groups will be as follows:

IAG Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use the 14-19 Prospectus as a tool to advise young people about the local offer. ■ Be able to search for courses by start dates to identify suitable courses with late or flexible start dates for young people who drop out of courses during the academic year³. ■ Use management information drawn from CAP to identify those young people that have or have not applied for courses, therefore allowing the targeting of IAG to support young people at the right time. ■ Use the management information drawn from CAP to report to DCSF via CCIS on delivery of the September Guarantee.
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³ The NEET Flexible provision guidance can be found at: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?go=site.home&sid=42&pid=343&ctype=None&ptype=Contents>

Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Publicise courses they are providing as they become available. ■ Personal tutors, and Careers Co-ordinators in Careers Education and Guidance classes, will use an up to date 14-19 Prospectus as an impartial tool to inform young people about the options available to them and to enable them to apply through CAP. ■ Use the 14-19 Prospectus to explain the progression routes available from different courses.
Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges, and Work-based Learning Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Publicise courses to a wider audience than perhaps their own prospectus would reach. Compatibility with an institution's own prospectus should ensure that colleges do not need to re-input their data. ■ Publicise courses with late or flexible start dates. ■ Admissions teams will be able to receive and manage applications to courses through the CAP as well as make personalised offers to young people through the system, facilitating their existing admissions processes. ■ Monitor and report on progress in processing applications. ■ Support students to understand and identify progression routes from their course.
Consortia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide information about delivery arrangements for Diplomas and other courses, including which sites courses will be taught at.
14-19 Partnerships and Local Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The CAP taken together with the Client Caseload Information Service (CCIS) will support local authorities to ensure their IAG services are effectively targeted and that the September Guarantee is delivered. ■ Once fully populated and up to date, management information about the supply of courses and demand for these courses (including by geographical area) can be used to inform the commissioning of provision.

Some areas are already exploring the use of management information drawn from the 14-19 Prospectus.

Greater Manchester – use of management information ‘drawn-up’ from the ten local 14-19 Prospectuses

The Data Analysis and Reporting tool, being implemented in Greater Manchester, is in its early stages of use. In 2008-09 the tool is being used in planning and commissioning across Greater Manchester, for example:

- To inform the 14-19 Plan in each borough;
- To identify if there is an under or oversupply of provision offered. This has been looked at by level of course, by sector, subject area, and by specific courses. It has also been looked at by providers in a given locality;
- To plan to meet the 2013 Diploma entitlement;
- To enable planners to ensure curriculum breadth and progression opportunities for learners, e.g the Diploma and Apprenticeships;
- To identify and ensure supply of provision suitable for a particular type of learner, such as NEET and vulnerable learners;
- To inform the September Guarantee process so that it is geographically coherent;
- To identify the provision offer; and
- To analyse provision in relation to the needs of employers/skills shortages in area.

Alison Cresswell, Greater Manchester LSC

As we progress towards 2010, local authorities will increasingly be working in sub-regional groupings to take forward their commissioning responsibilities. Sub-regional groupings will want to consider how they can draw on the management information available through the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP and may consider extending the 14-19 Prospectus to cover these new groupings and travel to learn areas.

Chapter 3: 14-19 Prospectus – progress and next steps

Many 14-19 Prospectuses are already responding to the minimum standards set out in Chapter 2. This chapter aims to provide contextual information about progress to date in developing local prospectuses and describes the key challenges and how we will support areas to overcome these.

The 14-19 Pathfinders, established in 2003, and areas responding to Area Wide Inspections, were the first to develop online databases of 14-19 learning opportunities and progression routes. These early 14-19 Prospectuses were developed to help plan provision and also provided information to learners and their parents or carers about the local learning offer. As the 14-19 changes were launched with the 14-19 Education and Skills White paper (2005), the 14-19 Prospectus was seen as an essential part of the reform programme and the 14-19 Implementation Plan set out our expectations that all areas should have a 14-19 Prospectus by the autumn of 2007.

Progress

Local areas worked hard to achieve this goal and by autumn 2007, there were 87 14-19 Prospectuses covering the 150 local authority areas in England. Ofsted found in their recent survey of 16 local areas⁴ that almost three quarters of the areas had made good progress in introducing the 14–19 Prospectus. All 14-19 Prospectuses are available via DirectGov (www.direct.gov.uk/14-19prospectus).

Development of the 14-19 Prospectus has progressed at a greater pace where the collaborative arrangements, usually led through the 14-19 Partnership, are working well. The majority of areas have purchased software from commercial software suppliers. 14-19 Prospectus software development has been informed by client user groups to ensure products are developed to meet local requirements, in-line with national requirements. Commercial software suppliers

⁴ Implementation of 14-19 reforms: an evaluation of progress (2008)

have also offered a hosting, support and development service. A small number of areas have produced their own in-house solution.

Functionality

Most areas have a searchable directory of courses mediated through an attractive and user-friendly website. Areas have continually developed their websites to improve the service they provide to young people. The quality of the information held on 14-19 Prospectuses varies and areas have told us that ensuring that information is up to date is a challenge, requiring close collaboration with learning providers. We would expect the introduction of the CAP to act as an incentive for learning providers to keep their data up to date and improved interoperability should make this less time-consuming for learning providers.

Support for Development

It is clear that there has been significant innovation across the country. We want to build on this in achieving our ambition for the 14-19 Prospectus – *a high quality service, equivalent to the best, for all young people across the country.*

There are 3 particular areas which contribute to achieving our ambition for the 14-19 Prospectus where we will provide support at a national level.

1. Ensuring that young people's choice is not restricted to their own 14-19 Prospectus area

We have set out in chapter 2 that we want all young people to have genuine choice in learning opportunities. This means it is essential that young people can see learning opportunities across an area that makes sense to them, not restricted to the 14-19 Prospectus area they live in. To achieve this, we will need interoperability between 14-19 Prospectuses.

Some 14-19 Prospectuses already cover a travel to learn area and only a minority of young people explore or pursue opportunities outside that area. This is the case, for example, in London where 33 boroughs have collaborated to create one 14-19 Prospectus that allows users to search by borough, postcode or distance from home. In addition, most areas ensure that young people can follow a link to neighbouring 14-19 Prospectus areas from their site. This works well but there is scope for simplification. It should be possible for young people to search opportunities provided by learning providers in neighbouring 14-19 Prospectus areas by searching once on their own 14-19 Prospectus.

Greater Manchester LSC has developed an overarching 14-19 Prospectus covering the ten local authority areas in Greater Manchester. Each 14-19 Prospectus is individually managed within the local authority and holds the information about what courses are available in that area. The overarching 14-19 Prospectus allows young people to search for courses across the whole of Greater Manchester returning a list of relevant opportunities from all ten 14-19 Prospectuses. It then allows the young person to click on the courses, at which point the young person is taken to the individual 14-19 Prospectus website.

An effective search across a number of 14-19 Prospectuses via a regional portal, or the capacity to make available information about courses from large learning providers in neighbouring 14-19 Prospectus areas, relies on the setting of data standards. Data standards describe the expected meaning and acceptable representation of data for use within a defined context. Consistency of meaning is vital to facilitate the sharing of course-related information between 14-19 Prospectuses.

We are aware that eXchange of Course-Related Information (XCRI) has been adopted by many local areas in developing their 14-19 Prospectus. XCRI is a standard developed to describe course-related information. It enables systems which use XCRI to operate in an integrated way. XCRI is already used in Higher Education and has the potential to be used in Further Education and schools as a data standard for course-related information. However, it relies on the definition of a vocabulary and appropriate technology bindings (for example, XML (Extensible Markup Language) and RDF (Resource Description Framework)) for describing course-related information. The Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) has supported 2 pilots in Greater Manchester and in the East Midlands where XCRI has been used for 14-19 Prospectuses and other systems.

Benefits of using XCRI (drawn from the XCRI Pilots)

The benefits of all Prospectuses adopting the same XCRI data standard for course-related information are:

- Learning providers which attract learners from more than one 14-19 Prospectus area will be able to input their data once to a Prospectus using the XCRI data standards and then generate a data feed from this site at the click of a button, which they can send to other 14-19 Prospectuses. This data feed can then be uploaded automatically on to the other 14-19 Prospectus sites providing these are also using the same XCRI data standards.
- Young people will be able to see information about courses in a similar format no matter which area they live in and there is scope for ensuring that this information is easy for young people to understand.
- By clearly defining the values of each field, it makes it easier for learning providers to enter their course-related information and reduces the chances of learning providers entering blank fields or catch-all options which mean nothing to young people.
- Having standardised course-related information means that it becomes possible to produce meaningful management information reports.

In January 2009, the DCSF/DIUS Information Standards Board endorsed XCRI as the data standard for 14-19 Prospectuses. We are keen to realise the benefits of having consistent data across all 14-19 Prospectuses. Therefore, building on the work carried out in Greater Manchester and the East Midlands, **we will work at a national level with stakeholders, including 14-19 Prospectus software suppliers, local areas and learning providers, to define XCRI vocabularies for the 14-19 Prospectus. We will publish the results of this work by the end of August 2009 and would like all local areas to adopt these data standards by 2010.**

2. Providing information about quality of provision to inform young people's choices

In chapter 2, we set out that we want information about quality of provision to be available to young people. Initially this will involve making inspection reports accessible from provider entries on the 14-19 Prospectus, but it is our aspiration to make information about quality more accessible and detailed, including potentially, at the course level. This will include information about schools,

school sixth forms and colleges. Two key developments will support this direction of travel:

- **The development of the School Report Card:** In October 2008, we announced our intention to improve the way in which school performance is reported to parents or carers, communities and other stakeholders, providing clear and comprehensive information in a new School Report Card. The School Report Card will initially be produced for mainstream primary and secondary schools (including Academies), with the intention of later rolling it out across the whole maintained sector. The School Report Card will:
 - Provide a clearer, more balanced and comprehensive account of each school's performance, which complements Ofsted's inspection reports;
 - Inform parents'/carers' choice of school and improve schools' accountability to parents or carers; and
 - Provide information in a more easily understandable format, which is accessible to a wider audience.

The School Report Card will be piloted with schools and others in the maintained sector from autumn 2009 to spring 2011.

- **The development of a framework for assessing performance that is common across all post-16 providers:** *Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver* committed us to develop a clear framework for assessing performance which is common across all post-16 providers of education and training for young people and adults, based on the Framework for Excellence (FfE), which is already used in colleges. We have committed to pilot the FfE from September 2009 in school sixth forms as a basis for the development of a unified post-16 provider performance assessment framework. This framework will:
 - provide a standardised set of performance indicators which will give an objective and comprehensive picture of the quality of post-16 providers that are judged annually against national standards and complement Ofsted's inspection and risk based scheduling; and

- use modern technology to help learners, parents or carers and IAG practitioners to access the information they need to make comparisons across different courses and settings and support all young people to make good choices about post-16 education.

We will ensure, through the pilots, that the new post-16 provider performance framework for schools with sixth forms aligns with the School Report Card and vice versa, so as to provide a coherent approach for schools.

We will ensure that information about these developments is made available as they progress, including the role the 14-19 Prospectus might play in communicating information about quality of provision to young people and parents or carers.

3. Ensuring the 14-19 Prospectus is young people's first choice for information on learning opportunities in an area

Many local areas have already undertaken a publicity campaign to improve young people's awareness of the 14-19 Prospectus in their area. For example, approaches to raising young people's awareness include advertisements on the local radio station, DVDs to be used in schools, leaflets and stands at school options evenings.

Now that all 14-19 Prospectuses are established, we want to support local areas in raising young people's awareness of the 14-19 Prospectus through a national communications campaign. The national 14-19 Prospectus portal on DirectGov will be important as the route by which young people and their parents or carers can find their local area Prospectus. Therefore, **we will develop this hub to ensure that it provides information about what young people should expect from their local 14-19 Prospectus and ensure there is an easy route through to local 14-19 Prospectuses.**

From autumn 2009, we will **promote 14-19 Prospectuses through DCSF communications activity.**

We will track young people's awareness of the 14-19 Prospectus through the 14-19 Tracking Survey, the Diploma Evaluation and as part of the IAG section of the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England.

Chapter 4: Common Application Process – progress and next steps

This chapter sets out our expectations in relation to the development of the Common Application Process (CAP), outlines progress to date and explores the key challenges to development and proposed solutions to overcome these. In doing so, it looks at some of the technical aspects which will be relevant for local authorities, those leading development of the CAP and software suppliers.

In *Delivering 14-19 Reforms: Next Steps* we set out our aspiration for the Common Application Process (CAP) to be in place across every area for young people in year 11 by September 2010. We want all areas to continue to make significant progress with piloting the CAP. We recognise the need to work collaboratively with providers to ensure that cross-border applications are achievable. Our expectation is that the latest the CAP will be in place for year 11 learners is 2011.

What do we mean by a CAP?

The CAP will make it easier for young people to apply for education and training.

- It will be the way in which all young people in year 11 apply for education and training opportunities so that they no longer have to navigate different application processes for different opportunities.
- Young people will use it to apply for education and training courses from entry level through to level 3, namely Apprenticeships, Diplomas and progression pathways within the Foundation Learning Tier and General Qualifications (GCSEs and A Levels).

The CAP will need to be introduced on a consultative and participative basis. The introduction of a CAP does not mean that the admissions process for each course will be the same. We know that colleges, sixth forms and training providers have developed their own admissions policies over time and the CAP will not change

these. However, the CAP may introduce some standardisation in processes which is often in the interests of young people, parents or carers and institutions themselves. In the early adopter areas, the CAP has provided one single mechanism for young people to make applications to courses via the 14-19 Prospectus, and this has allowed local authorities and the Connexions Service to track learners and their progress in applying for courses. The CAP should bring a level of consistency to initial applications for courses and should support learning providers to manage admissions to courses.

The case study on the next page, illustrates how we would like the CAP to work for a young person.

How will it work – our vision

Sangita was aware of her local 14-19 Prospectus when she started year 11 as she had been introduced to it back in year 9 when she was thinking about her 14-19 options. Therefore, it seemed natural to her that she should apply for her courses post-16 online through the 14-19 Prospectus. By the end of October she had been issued with a personal log-in and password and during a careers education lesson, her teacher re-introduced the class to the 14-19 Prospectus and Common Application Process by showing them around the website on the whiteboard. Sangita didn't really know what she wanted to do post-16 so spent quite a bit of time, mainly at home, looking at the 14-19 Prospectus to find out what was available in her area, saving searches which she thought were promising in her personalised view. Through the 14-19 Prospectus, Sangita found out about an open day at her local college which she attended to get a feel for the place. She also went to taster sessions advertised on the 14-19 Prospectus for some of the courses she was interested in. Sangita showed her parents the website and they also used it to understand the options available locally and to inform their discussion with Sangita's subject teachers on parents evening.

Following a discussion with her Connexions Personal Advisor (PA) where she talked through her thoughts and asked the PA's advice, Sangita decided on an Advanced Diploma in Society, Health and Development at her local college. She simply went on to the 14-19 Prospectus website, which by now she was familiar with, logged on and found the course in her saved searches. She brought up the details of the course and then clicked the 'apply for course' button. An application form was automatically generated which pre-populated the information about the course from the Prospectus and also pre-populated her details which she was asked to check. She clicked to confirm the application and it disappeared. When she clicked on 'applications', she could see the application had been sent to the college.

When the college logged on to the 14-19 Prospectus to check the applications they had received, Sangita's application was there. The admissions tutor acknowledged the application through the same system straight to Sangita's applications inbox and began the normal admissions process for the course. Once this was complete, she made an offer to Sangita which again was sent direct to Sangita's applications inbox.

Sangita, having tracked her application over the time it had taken for the application to be processed via her applications inbox, was thrilled to get an offer. She had also made two other applications by this time and had offers for these courses as well. Sangita's Connexions PA was pleased to see she had 3 offers. Sangita accepted two of the offers (conditional on her results). She now just needed to see how she did in her GCSEs!

We do not expect the CAP to have a role on results day at this stage. On results day, IAG Professionals and school staff have an opportunity to check that young people are intending to take up their offers, and to provide additional support to those whose results were not as expected, and wish to reconsider their post-16 options. Clearing house events, where colleges and training providers are able to market their provision to young people have proved an effective means of engaging those without an offer.

Progress in implementing the CAP

We carried out a survey of the 87 Prospectus areas in July 2008 and of the areas that responded, at least 17 areas indicated that they are already implementing or piloting a CAP with 20 more areas moving to pilot in the 2008/09 academic year. Areas that have implemented a CAP have said that the benefits include:

- quicker submission and acknowledgement of applications where providers' internal procedures are adapted to support the CAP;
- higher quality applications;
- young people's ownership of the process and ability to track progress of their application;
- the Personal Adviser's overview improves caseload management and allows early intervention with learners at risk of not progressing;
- administrative efficiencies (costs, paper). Application details can be imported into Management Information Systems quickly and efficiently;
- all collaborative partners know what is happening to the application; and
- there is the potential to draw management information from the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP to ensure that provision meets demand.

Areas where CAP has been implemented have developed a locally agreed approach to implementation. Some areas have begun by piloting the CAP for certain qualifications. Others have focused on a specific geographical area or worked with particular post-16 learning providers before rolling out more widely.

Table 1: Examples of different approaches to implementation of CAP

Leeds	<p>Leeds successfully piloted the CAP in 2007-08 with three 11-16 high schools and the eight FE colleges in the city. The focus of the pilot was to develop processes to support the integration of the CAP into existing careers education and IAG provision.</p> <p>The remaining 13 high schools will be supported with processes to adopt the CAP by September 2009.</p>
Kent	<p>In 2007-08 Kent piloted the CAP in five of the ten 14-19 planning areas covering about 7,000 young people. Training sessions on the CAP were targeted at heads of the school sixth form, admin staff, careers teachers and Connexions PAs based in schools. This enabled staff to provide support to young people going through the process.</p> <p>The CAP allows Kent to track delivery of the September Guarantee and target the support of Connexions PAs effectively by enabling them to monitor applications and offers. This ensures that young people get a timely and tailored service.</p>
Tameside	<p>Tameside operate a local authority-led consortium for delivering Diplomas. They have used a CAP to recruit learners to Diplomas being delivered in September 2008.</p> <p>The CAP was used initially for recruitment to the Engineering Diploma (all levels) and was made available to all Tameside schools in the consortium. Following successful use for the Diploma, the CAP was then used for applications to two Young Apprenticeship schemes. It was made available to all learners in the authority's high schools.</p>

A local approach to development

14-19 Prospectuses have been developed successfully at local and, in some cases, regional levels and hold information about all available courses. It is important that any application process is linked to the provision available locally and that all local learning providers are involved in the development of that process as has been demonstrated in the early adopter areas. This could not be easily achieved through a 'top down' national CAP.

We have carried out a high level assessment of average costs of developing local CAPs against that of developing a national system. This assessment found that there is little difference in cost between the two approaches. The same assessment suggested that there is greater scope for finding efficiencies by taking a local approach to development, for example by developing the CAP over a wider geographical area than a local authority area (as many local authorities have chosen to do for the 14-19 Prospectus). **For this reason, we have provided £1.7 million in funding to local authorities, in 2008-09 and for the next 2 years, to develop the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP. This may be pooled to take forward developments over a wider geographical area.**

In taking forward development at a local level we need to ensure that key lessons from the development of national application systems are taken into account. The following sections have been informed by such lessons learnt.

Enabling applications across boundaries

In taking a local approach to development of the CAP we need to ensure that we are not restricting young people's choice. We set out in chapter 3 that we want to implement data standards for the 14-19 Prospectus so that young people can search a wider local area than that covered by their local 14-19 Prospectus. We also want young people, if they wish, to be able to apply for courses outside their immediate local authority area or the area covered by their 14-19 Prospectus.

To enable applications to be made and processed across 14-19 Prospectus areas and local authority boundaries, we need to ensure that the information gathered through the CAP is consistent across all areas.

To ensure that the information gathered is consistent between areas, we intend to set core fields for the CAP. We have worked with a sample of early adopters of the CAP to develop an understanding of what learner, course and provider-related information they currently collect in their application. We have made an initial assessment of which fields ought to be consistent across all local area common applications. **We will work with stakeholders to consult and agree the core fields for the CAP and publish the results of this work in August, alongside the XCRI data standards for course-related information.**

Alignment with the on-line Apprenticeship vacancy matching system

The Apprenticeship vacancy matching system has been established to provide a single web-based location for high quality and dynamic information on Apprenticeships for use by employers, potential apprentices, their parents or carers and those providing advice and guidance. The Apprenticeship vacancy matching system enables individuals to search and apply for live vacancies and helps employers and their training providers to advertise their vacancies to a wide range of interested applicants. In doing so, it can also provide powerful management information on all aspects of Apprenticeship recruitment.

We have worked with the LSC and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) to explore how best to achieve alignment between the Apprenticeship vacancy matching system and the CAP. We have three shared aims:

- We want the application process to be as simple as possible for learners and employers.
- We want young people to receive effective IAG by getting the support they need at the right time.
- We would not want to restrict the ability of employers to get the information they need to fill Apprenticeship vacancies.

In the short term, we expect all local 14-19 Prospectuses to signpost young people to www.apprenticeships.org.uk through which young people can access the Apprenticeship vacancy matching system. The National Apprenticeships website will signpost young people to the national portal for 14-19 Prospectuses on DirectGov from May 2009.

In addition, in order to ensure that young people applying for Apprenticeships receive timely IAG, Connexions should work with the regional NAS Project Teams. Management information reports and data produced by the Apprenticeship vacancy matching system, detailing vacancies and unsuccessful candidate details can be generated to inform provision of IAG.

Achieving full alignment will require detailed work between the software suppliers of the Apprenticeship vacancy matching system and the software suppliers of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP. **DCSF and NAS will work with software suppliers to develop a pathfinder** to explore how to:

- integrate search functions to enable young people to research and compare all opportunities; and
- integrate the application process to enable young people to easily apply for all post 16 opportunities.

The pathfinder will also look at how to integrate management information between the CAP and the Apprenticeship vacancy matching system to support the targeting of IAG to young people. The results of this pathfinder will be shared with all suppliers and local authorities. The pathfinder will conclude by September 2009.

Getting interoperability between systems

The CAP will also need to interface with other national and local systems. These are as follows:

- *Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP)* which aims to streamline the collection, handling and sharing of information on learning and achievement for education and training organisations. MIAP provide the Learner Registration Service (LRS) which is capable of allocating a Unique Learner Number to every person aged 14 and over in education and training. The ULN will support sharing of learner information – for example, through the CAP – across local authority boundaries. MIAP also provides the UK Register of Learning Providers which allocates a UK Provider Reference Number. This is needed to have a unique and centralised method of identifying learning providers.

- The *Client Caseload Information System (CCIS)* holds a range of information on young people aged 13-19 in order to assess progress in local areas on a range of measures, including reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). It is managed by local Connexions services which are the responsibility of local authorities. DCSF collates the top level statistics from CCIS into a national system. This includes information on whether young people have a suitable offer in order that we can monitor delivery of the September Guarantee. The CAP needs to provide information to CCIS to inform monitoring and delivery of the September Guarantee.
- *School and College Management Information Systems* capture and offer a means of analysing a variety of learner and course-related management information. Through the CAP, learning providers should specifically be able to share student data automatically with the local authorities' CAP systems and enter decisions on a learner's application into their own MIS systems. This information will be transferred automatically to the local authority CAP system and will generate a reply to the learner's application. This will improve efficiency.

Diagram 1 at the end of this chapter sets out how we would like the different systems to interact.

Some local areas have achieved significant interoperability between the CAP and these systems but there are no areas that have yet achieved full interoperability with all key systems, although some intend to.

We will work with software suppliers of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP through a quarterly suppliers group to enable interfacing with national systems, namely MIAP and CCIS.

We will also work with two areas that are advanced early adopters of CAP to extend interoperability to all key systems and across borders. Through these advanced early adopters we will:

- **Explore further how to establish effective interfacing with learning providers' MIS; and**
- **Specify in detail the interfacing requirements with all key systems and the internal functionality of the CAP to process information.**

We will share information about the progress of these advanced early adopters with software suppliers through the quarterly software suppliers group and with 14-19 Partnerships.

In addition, we believe that the Systems Interoperability Framework (SIF) has the potential to support the dynamic sharing of data between different systems. SIF is the accepted US national standard for communication between systems at a school, district and national level across 2200 software vendors. DCSF and DIUS have signed a statement of intent to adopt SIF by 2010, setting a clear expectation that it will become a mandatory requirement in future procurement specifications.

SIF is currently being piloted in Birmingham. The purpose of the pilot is to explore how the SIF can be used in the UK to support the rapid and real time sharing of data between named systems. The pilot initially involves school systems, (including management information systems, library, catering and virtual learning systems) and local authority systems and is being expanded to include colleges. The project is supported by Becta and its commercial partners and will provide a blueprint for the wider deployment of SIF to other Local Authorities.

We anticipate that the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP will be able to benefit from the implementation of SIF as it should provide a method that allows systems to easily synchronise information. This should enable, for example, a learning provider to update their course-related information on one 14-19 Prospectus and for this information to be automatically updated on any other 14-19 Prospectuses where the learning provider's information is provided. It should also allow learners to use the CAP within their local 14-19 Partnership to apply for a course offered by a learning provider that is outside the area covered by their local 14-19 Prospectus, by managing the process of sharing information within application forms from one local authority to another.

Becta will share learning from the pilot in Birmingham as it becomes available and we will provide further guidance in relation to use of SIF for 14-19 Prospectuses and CAP in 2010.

Possible integration of the CAP with other tools

In implementing CAP, our over-riding aim is to make it easier for learners to apply for learning opportunities. Automating the application process so that they can apply through one site will help to achieve this. Ensuring that consistent information is collected in applications across all local areas will also help ensure that young people can apply for courses outside the area covered by their 14-19 Prospectus.

Some early adopters have also integrated their Individual Learning Plans (ILP) with the CAP.

Wolverhampton

My-iPlan is a secure (password-protected) online environment where learners aged 14 to 19 can access and input key information about themselves, their learning, their progress and their plans for the future. Each learner owns their iPlan in which they can express aspirations, set and review personal goals and clearly see the progress they're making and the feedback they've received. To ensure every learner's iPlan is authentic and accurate, any information entered by the learner must be validated by an adult involved in their learning. My-iPlan empowers learners by enabling them to participate more actively in the planning and evaluation of their own learning. Information is drawn from young people's my iPlan to create applications for learning opportunities through a CAP. A structured process (the online progression process) is in place to ensure that in making applications, year 9 and 11 learners follow a similar process including getting information, advice and guidance.

Paul Bellamy, Wolverhampton Local Authority

In the longer term, areas may wish to consider development of the ILP and integration with CAP but will want to take account of the IAG Strategy (due to be published in 2009) in doing so.

Ensuring Data Security

In September 2008, Becta published a series of good practice guides for data security in response to the Cabinet Office report *Data Handling Procedures in Government*⁵. This report set out how the government is 'improving its arrangements around information and data security, by putting in place core protective measures, getting the working culture right, improving accountability

5 *Data Procedures in Government* available for download from http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/reports/data_handling.aspx.

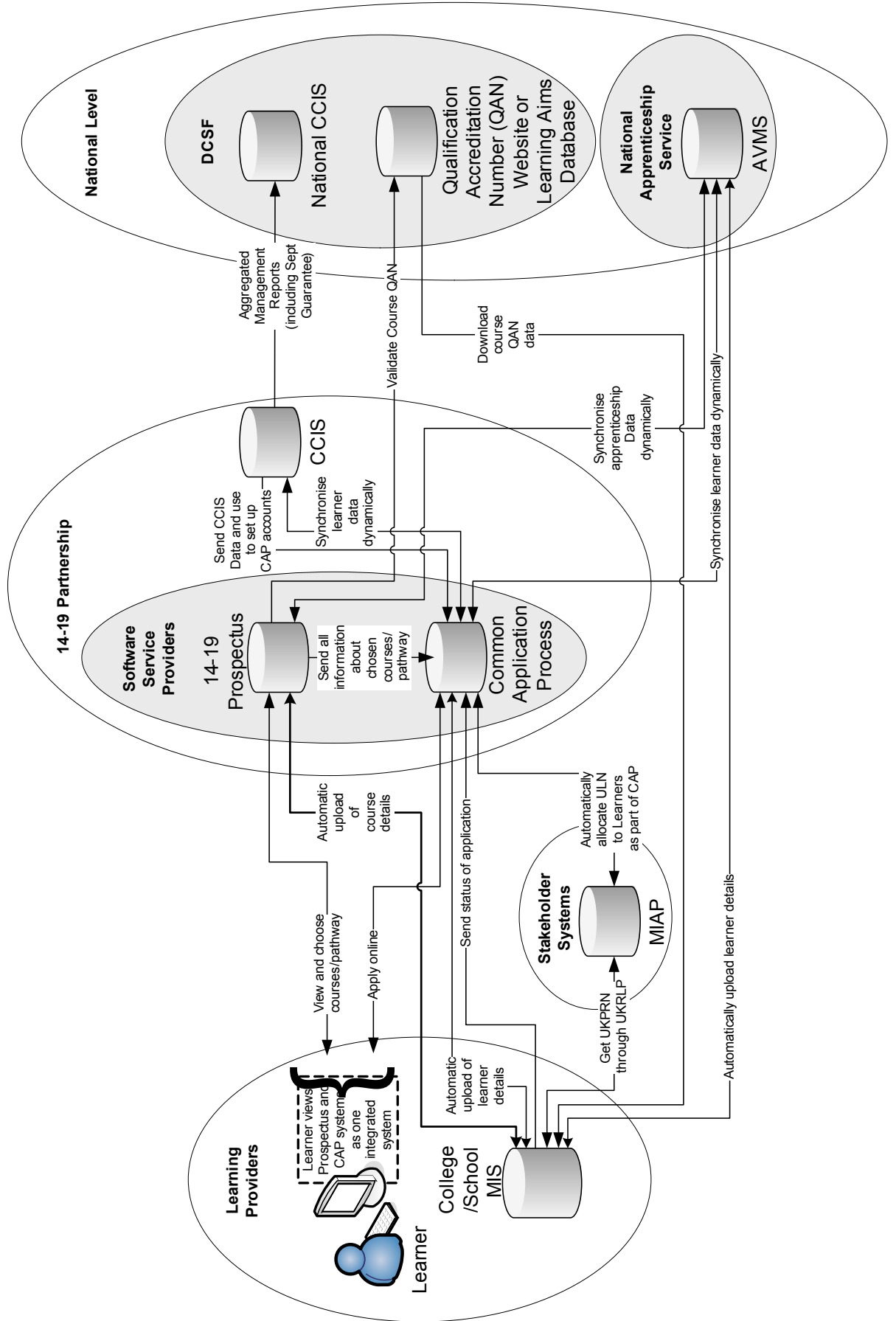
and scrutiny of performance' in response to high profile losses of personal data. Building on these requirements, the Cabinet Office in December 2008 published HMG Security Policy Framework⁶, a set of seven Security Policies which outline the mandatory security requirements and management arrangements to which all government departments and agencies (defined as including all bodies directly responsible to them, including local authorities) must adhere.

These policies provide core security principles that should be followed to ensure that government assets (information, property and staff) are protected in a proportionate manner and that information, including personal data, can be shared confidently knowing it is reliable, accessible and protected to agreed standards. As such, it is good practice for schools, colleges, learning providers and universities to follow these policies in a way that is proportionate and appropriate for their situations. Becta's good practice documents are being updated to reflect the new policies and to incorporate feedback from a number of parties. **These good practice documents will consider data security in relation to the implementation of CAP.**

The sharing of applicants' information through this process will require particular attention. 14-19 Partnerships need to agree a Data Security Policy that can operate throughout the group, in order that they can have trust and confidence that information will be protected and used securely throughout the partnership. Learners and parents or carers (for younger learners) should be asked to indicate their acceptance of an appropriate fair processing notice as part of the application procedure. This should include enabling learners to indicate whether they wish their application details to be shared with their school or college.

6 HMG Security Policy Framework available for download from <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/spf.aspx>

Diagram 1: Expected Interaction between the CAP and other systems



Chapter 5: Enabling 14-19 Partnerships to lead change and drive progress

This chapter sets out our expectations of 14-19 Partnerships and local authorities in leading change and driving progress, how we will assess progress and the support that we will offer to help local areas to deliver.

The 14-19 Partnerships and Planning⁷ document set out what we expect of 14-19 Partnerships in leading change at a local level across the 14-19 reforms. 14-19 Partnerships are responsible for agreeing the long-term vision for delivering the reforms and developing and evaluating area-wide strategies for the full range of 14-19 priorities. As such, we expect 14-19 Partnerships to take a strong leading role in developing the 14-19 Prospectus and Common Application Process (CAP) and will want to ensure that these developments are priorities in their local 14-19 Plan. A designated lead should be nominated with responsibility for driving developments of the 14-19 Prospectus and for implementing the CAP. The designated lead should be accountable to the 14-19 Partnership.

A specific focus for the 14-19 Partnership

Implementing the CAP represents a significant change. It will require local authorities, local Connexions services, the LSC (until April 2010), schools, colleges and work-based learning providers to work closely through their 14-19 Partnership to collectively understand the benefits of the CAP and agree a shared plan for implementation. It is important that all providers have a say in the process and buy into the shared plan.

⁷ 14 – 19 Partnerships and Planning available for download from <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/documents/14%2D19%5Fpartnerships%5Fand%5Fplanning.pdf>

During the planning process, it will be important to tackle key questions like:

- How will the process ensure that young people are able to exercise real choice and gain impartial information and advice?
- How will the process support providers to be able to deal with the volume of applications they receive?
- How will larger providers be able to manage CAP applications alongside existing admissions protocols?
- How will young people across the area be introduced to the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP as part of a careers education programme? In which year and at what point in that academic year?
- Is there equality of access to IT across schools and young people?
- How will young people have continued access (for example, if they lose their log in details or leave school)?

Most areas will want to pilot the CAP before rolling it out over a wider area. Plans for piloting and rollout will need to be developed at the outset. The 14-19 Partnership or those 14-19 Partnerships working together across a wider geographical area will want to regularly review progress in the implementation of the CAP in order to learn lessons as implementation progresses.

Development firmly linked to delivery of IAG Quality Standards

Development of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP must be firmly linked to delivery of the Information, Advice and Guidance Quality Standards. Quality Standards 1.5, 3.5 and 7.9 refer directly to the 14-19 Prospectus recognising the importance of the 14-19 Prospectus in providing information to young people and their parents or carers⁸. IAG practitioners have a responsibility for promoting the 14-19 Prospectus to young people and their parents or carers.

Schools, Colleges and Training Providers playing their part in delivery

Schools and colleges of course have a critical role to play in introducing the 14-19 Prospectus to young people at the right time and in supporting them to use it. 14-19 Partnerships should ensure that schools and colleges know what they need to do, when and that they have the appropriate support and training to enable them to be successful in carrying out the tasks asked of them. We

⁸ The IAG Quality Standards available for download from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources-and-practice/IG00253/>

expect schools, colleges and training providers will want to ensure their course-related information detailed on the 14-19 Prospectus is fully up to date and that their students are able to take full advantage of the 14-19 Prospectus and the CAP as it is introduced. They will also want to ensure that young people are introduced to the 14-19 Prospectus as part of a Careers Education Programme.

Funding to support development

We are committed to supporting local areas to develop the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP in the direction set out in this document over the coming years. Therefore, as announced in *Delivering 14-19 Reforms: Next Steps*, we have made available an additional £1.7m to help support development.

Local areas should also continue to draw on their mainstream funding to support development of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP. For example the Flexible 14-19 Funding which is delivered through the Area Based Grant. This is provided to local authorities to plan, build and sustain the administrative and logistical capacity needed to support 14-19 reform. Connexions funding, also allocated through the Area Based Grant, amounts to £466 million in each of the financial years 2009/10 and 2010/11. This funding may be drawn on to support development of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP. The Area Based Grant is not ring-fenced and decisions must be taken locally about how it will meet Government priorities.

Priorities for local development

In order to get consistency across the country, we want all local areas to focus on meeting the same priorities for development which we expect to be met over the next 3 academic years. These are set out in Table 2. We expect 14-19 Partnerships to put in place robust management arrangements to ensure that the priorities for local development are delivered to the national timescales.

Support to enable the sharing of good practice

We know that local areas have built up a wealth of knowledge in developing their 14-19 Prospectus and CAP. Many challenges in the development of 14-19 Prospectuses and the CAP can only be resolved at a local level and the sharing of knowledge and experience between different areas can help. There are examples of local challenges which are preventing progress in some areas but have been overcome by other areas. There is also an appetite from local 14-19 Prospectus leads to engage with each other to problem solve and share good practice.

In 2009, the Learning Visits programme will include opportunities to see how other areas have developed the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP. A number of local areas have been funded to host Learning Visits. The schedule and booking details can be found at: www.ncsl.org.uk/programmes-index/14-19-index/14-19-learning-visits-programme.htm

To support local areas to work together in the development of their 14-19 Prospectus, **we are establishing an online forum through which 14-19 Prospectus leads can discuss local challenges, solutions and development activity.** Through the online forum we will also collect and share good practice case studies and periodically carry out online surveys to identify issues that require attention at a national level. The online forum, which will be trialled for 6 months initially from April 2009, can be accessed at: www.14-19prospectusforum.com

Table 2: Development priorities for 14-19 Partnerships

Academic Year 2008-2009	Academic Year 2009-2010	Academic Year 2010-2011	2011 and beyond
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that the 14-19 Prospectus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● represents all education and training opportunities from entry level to level 3 ● has systems in place to ensure data quality and coverage ● is searchable (including by course start date) and user friendly, having tested it with young people ● includes information and signposting about where to get further support from IAG professionals, including Connexions Direct ● is introduced to young people in school as a tool within a careers education programme ■ Develop a shared plan for implementing CAP for the year 11 cohort through the 14-19 Partnership ■ Use the self assessment toolkit to determine areas for development and feed this information through to the 14-19 Progress Checks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement the defined XCRI vocabulary and CAP core fields ■ Develop a plan for the use of management information and gain sign up from all relevant partners ■ Pilot CAP for the year 11 cohort ■ Use the self assessment toolkit to determine areas for development and feed this information through to the 14-19 Progress Checks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement (or at least pilot) the CAP for the year 11 cohort ■ Use the self assessment toolkit to determine areas for development and feed this information through to the 14-19 Progress Checks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ By 2011, full implementation of the CAP for the year 11 cohort ■ From September 2012 – Pilot CAP for 14-19 year olds ■ From September 2013 – roll out CAP across the 14-19 age range

Assessment of progress

We want to ensure that local progress in development of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP is monitored consistently across the country and therefore, we are introducing the following mechanisms to support this.

1. Support for areas to improve through self assessment

Alongside this document, we are publishing an on-line self assessment tool to enable areas to monitor their own progress towards the goals we have set out. This has been developed by the LSC in consultation with a group of local 14-19 Prospectus leads. It will allow local areas to benchmark their own 'stage of development' against national expectations and identify priorities for development. Local areas can use this as a basis to feed into their self assessment of the 14-19 Progress Checks Performance Indicator 14. The self assessment tool is available to be downloaded from www.14-19prospectusforum.com

2. Progress to be reported through 14-19 Progress Checks

Each autumn, 14-19 Partnerships are asked to submit a self-assessment of their progress on the 14-19 reforms as part of the 14-19 Progress Checks process, which is managed through Government Offices. From 2009, we will ask 14-19 Partnerships to use the 'From Here to Entitlement Toolkit'⁹ to report their 'stage of development' on the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP through the 14-19 Progress Checks. We will use this information to identify and share good practice and to target support.

3. Independent evaluation of developments

In November 2009 and November 2010 we will commission an independent evaluation of the development of 14-19 Prospectuses and CAP. We will share the results of these evaluations and will use the results to identify those areas that need help to implement the priorities set out in table 3.

In addition, we will continue to ask consortia to make an assessment of the quality of the Information, Advice and Guidance they offer when they apply to the Diploma Gateway. This will continue to be a requirement and will ensure that consortia remain committed to the 14-19 Prospectus as part of their IAG offer.

⁹ From Here to Entitlement Toolkit available for download from www.lsc.gov.uk/publications/latestdocuments/Detail.htm?id=f6017db4-d3b7-4ef0-8793-43ff593dce400

Ofsted is also carrying out a thematic review looking at IAG. As part of this, they will look at how 14-19 Prospectuses are being used to support provision of IAG. We will use the results of this thematic review to inform best practice. Ofsted will publish the results of this work in Summer 2009.

Summary of support

1. XCRI Vocabularies – We will work at a national level with stakeholders, including 14-19 Prospectus software suppliers, local areas and learning providers, to define XCRI vocabularies for the 14-19 Prospectus. We will publish the results of this work by the end of August 2009 and would like all local areas to adopt these data standards by 2010.

2. School Report Card and development of a common framework for assessing performance across all post-16 providers – We will ensure that information about these developments is made available as they progress, including the role the 14-19 Prospectus might play in communicating information about quality of provision to young people and parents/carers.

3. National Portal on Directgov – We will develop this hub to ensure that it provides information about what young people should expect from their local 14-19 Prospectus and ensure it is easy to access local 14-19 Prospectuses.

4. Promotion of the 14-19 Prospectus – From autumn 2009, we will promote 14-19 Prospectuses through DCSF communications activity.

5. Tracking Awareness of the 14-19 Prospectus – We will track young people's awareness of the 14-19 Prospectus through the 14-19 Tracking Survey, the Diploma Evaluation and as part of the IAG section of the Longitudinal Study of Young People in England.

6. Funding – We will provide £1.7 million in funding to local authorities, in 2009-10 and 2010-11, to develop the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP. This may be pooled to take forward development over a wider geographical area.

7. CAP Core fields – We will work with stakeholders to consult and agree the core fields for the CAP and publish the results of this work in August, alongside the XCRI data standards for course-related information.

8. Alignment with the Apprenticeship vacancy matching system – We (DCSF and NAS) will work with software suppliers to develop a pathfinder and the results will be shared with all software suppliers and local authorities. The pathfinder will conclude by September 2009.

9. Software Suppliers Group – We will work with software suppliers of the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP through a quarterly software suppliers group to share good practice about how to achieve interoperability between key systems.

10. Extending Interoperability – We will also work with two areas that are advanced early adopters of CAP to extend interoperability to all key systems and across borders.

11. Data security – Becta's good practice guides, which are being updated, will consider data security in relation to the implementation of the CAP.

12. SIF – Becta will share learning from the pilot in Birmingham as it becomes available and we will provide further guidance in relation to use of SIF for 14-19 Prospectuses and CAP in 2010.

13. Learning Visits – In 2009, the Learning Visits programme will include opportunities to see how other areas have developed the 14-19 Prospectus and CAP

14. On-line Forum – We are establishing an online forum through which 14-19 Prospectus leads can discuss local challenges, solutions and development activity. The online forum will be trialled for 6 months initially from April 2009.

15. Self Assessment – We will publish an on-line self assessment tool to enable areas to monitor their own progress towards the goals we have set out.

16. Independent Evaluation: In November 2009 and November 2010 we will commission an independent evaluation of the development of 14-19 Prospectuses and CAP.

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