



**Rt Hon Jim Knight MP**

Minister of State for Schools and Learners

Sanctuary Buildings Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT  
tel: 0870 0012345 dcsf.ministers@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

To all consortia

2 April 2009

Dear Colleague,

### **Diploma Gateway Application**

Thank you for your application to deliver the Diploma from September 2010. The Diploma is a crucial part of our plans to get more young people engaged and achieving in the 14-19 phase, provide young people with opportunities to experience different styles of learning and more options to encourage them to continue in learning for longer.

I am attaching the results of your Gateway 3 application and feedback for your consortium. For Gateway 3 we have changed the categories: Diploma lines in Category 1 are approved for delivery from 2010; those in Category 2 are approved for delivery from 2010 providing the conditions listed in their feedback are met within 3 months; those in Category 3a are approved for delivery from September 2011 providing the conditions listed in their feedback are met within 6 months; and those in Category 3b will be able to plan for delivery from September 2011 providing the conditions listed in their feedback are met within 12 months. This change will mean that no consortia will be asked to reapply. It also enables us to direct more support to areas where it will make significant impact on preparations and achievement of the Diploma entitlement.

Again, consortia have shown that they have made more progress in their preparations to deliver the Diploma. We have seen stronger results across the country with around 58% of applications gaining at least conditional approval for a September 2010 and a further 42% gaining conditional approval for a September 2011 start. This will enable a significant expansion in the opportunities available to our young people.

We are providing a range of tailored support available to you over the coming months to help with your preparations:

- In April or May an optional phone discussion with an assessor to discuss your results



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- In May and June a face-to-face meeting with your Consortium Adviser to discuss implementation planning and how the consortium can best be supported to deliver successfully. You may previously have known your Consortium Adviser as a Consortium Leadership Consultant; the change in name reflects a widening of their supporting and facilitating roles
- From summer 2009 a package of support offered by National Strategies and Learning and Skills Improvement Service available to all centres (not just FS pilot centres) to prepare for delivery of functional skills.

See <http://diploma-support.org/> for more information on the support available.

In previous years, the Consortia Support Grant has been allocated on the basis of £30,000 per line, per consortium. Although effective to date, we need to change the way we allocate funding this year to take account of more complex delivery models and mergers, and to support planning for the entitlement. Therefore, we will be allocating the 2009-10 Consortia Support Grant (£50m) on the basis of the overall numbers of 14-18 year olds in each local authority and the number of new Diploma lines on offer in each local authority for the first time from September 2010. We will ask local authorities to work with 14-19 partnerships to allocate funding locally.

We are providing this additional support to help your consortium build your capacity to deliver Diplomas and functional skills. It will be up to you and your local authority to decide how best to use these funds to maximise the impact in your preparations for Diploma and functional skills teaching.

Consortia with centres delivering the advanced Diploma can be included in the functional skills (FS) pilot from September 2009 if their learners need access to FS assessments before they are more widely available. Advanced Diploma centres should contact QCA to register for the pilot by emailing the QCA functional skills inbox [functionalskills@qca.org.uk](mailto:functionalskills@qca.org.uk) with: your centre name, postal address, contact name and details of the functional skills lead person in your centre and the category (Diploma). The QCA will contact you with details of the next steps once your eligibility has been established.

Thank you again for your application. I wish you all the best with your next stage of Diploma development and encourage you to make full use of the support available as you develop your plans.



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If you have any questions regarding this letter please email:  
[ask.gateway@dcsf.qsi.gov.uk](mailto:ask.gateway@dcsf.qsi.gov.uk)