

Study Programmes



What is a Study Programme?

Study programmes are publicly-funded programmes of learning for 16 to 19 year olds, or 16 to 25 year olds where the student has a learning difficulty assessment (LDA) or Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP), which are based on a young person's prior attainment and designed to meet clear educational and career aspirations.

Study programmes were introduced in September 2013, and all post-16 providers, regardless of setting, are now expected to offer each student a study programme which is coherent, appropriately challenging and supports the progression of the individual.

The background

The Department for Education (DfE) decided to implement study programmes in response to the findings of the Wolf Report (March 2011) which had identified a number of issues with the existing approach to providing post-16 vocational education, including:

- identified achievement of GCSE A*-C English and maths as 'critical importance' for successful progression into employment
- poor progression rates, particularly from lower level vocational qualifications, which often lacked currency with employers.



What does the Study Programme look like?

Post 16 settings will have some freedom in the way that they design and deliver study programmes. Each student's programme must include qualifications approved by the DfE. These principles state that a study programme should:

- provide progression to a level higher than that of their prior attainment
For students with a learning difficulty and/or disability – progression might be lateral, representing a broadening of skills
- be linked to suitable progression opportunities in training, employment or further levels of education
- require students to work towards GCSE A* – C grade in Maths and English (or other qualifications that will act as a stepping stone for achievement of these qualifications in time). Students with a learning difficulty and/or disability need not have their English and Maths learning accredited but do need to have skills in these two areas included in their programme, as relevant to their individual needs and planned progression
- Allow for meaningful work experience as appropriate. Where employment is not an appropriate progression aim, even in the longer term, this principle can be disappplied. However, study programmes do provide an opportunity to explore micro enterprises as well as paid employment and so could cover more creative employment opportunities for this group of students.

What will study programmes look like for students with LDD?

Many students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be accessing mainstream vocational or academic programmes, perhaps with additional support. Their study programme is likely to include a substantial qualification accredited English and Maths (or literacy or numeracy units), though not necessarily at GCSE level, an element of work experience and some non-qualification activity, such as tutorial time.

For students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are following more personalised programmes designed to increase employment and independent living outcomes, study programmes will vary considerably. Post 16 Settings will design programmes to meet their individual students' needs, provided they adhere to the principles for programmes of study, published by the DfE and be linked to the students pathway to Adulthood. Further information is available in the St Helens pathways to Adulthood Document which can be found on the council website www.sthelens.gov.uk/sen



How are study programmes funded?

The 16-19 funding model

Post 16 settings receive funding from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to support the delivery of the study programmes. Funding is divided into 3 elements, details are provided below;

- Element 1 – programme funding per student calculated using the Education Funding Agency (EFA) 16-19 funding formula this is likely to be approximately £4000
- Element 2 – is £6,000 and this is the amount an institution is expected to contribute towards supporting young people with High Needs attending their provision, this funding is provided by the EFA.
- Element 3 – top up funding to be allocated by the Local Authority from the High Needs Block funding within the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to Post 16 providers based on the Governments definition of high needs students who are those in need of educational provision which costs more than what is provided within Element 1 and 2 (approximately £10,000). Further information about Element 3 funding and Personal Budgets is available from the local offer website under Pathways to Adulthood.

Post 16 settings are provided funding to support the delivery of qualifications and modules of activity; the EFA has offered the following examples of how these hours might be spent:

- informal certificates
- tutorial purposes
- work experience/work related activity
- volunteering/community activities
- enrichment activities

They have also advised on activity that cannot be funded, examples are outlined below:

- voluntary extra-curricular activities and clubs delivered during breaks or outside normal working pattern
- study that is homework or independent study/research that is not timetabled

How providers will be held to account for running good study programmes and Ofsted Inspection

Ofsted will inspect study programme provision delivered in schools, colleges or Academy sixth forms and their judgements will be based on criteria such as;

- how effective and efficient the provider is in meeting the needs of students and other users
- evaluate to what extent students achieve and make progress relative to their starting points
- quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- leadership and management

Example Study programmes in St Helens

Summaries of example Study Programmes are provided below. Further information about Study Programmes can be obtained from Post 16 Settings, their details of which are available on the council website, St Helens local offer SEN/Pathways to Adulthood

St Helens College: supported employment programme

Progression focus: supported employment (leading to open employment in some cases)

Programme content: employability skills, relevant English and Maths skills, and specific support to address individuals' barriers to gaining employment (e.g. travel training) and to enhance employability prospects, developed through substantial time in one or more workplaces, with the support of a job coach, and complementary learning one day per week at college.

Accreditation: Award in Employability Skills (either E3 or L1), Functional Skills in English, Maths, ICT (at an appropriate level and as relevant to planned progression, so not necessarily accredited for all students in all three areas), small role-specific vocational awards for individuals to enhance employability (e.g. food hygiene for students working in a catering environment)



Sources of further useful information

Department for Education information and links to publications on 16-19
Study programmes

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/qandlearning/programmes>

Education Funding Agency information and links to publications on 16-19
funding, including for students with high needs

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/executiveagencies/efa/funding/fundings>

SEN and Disability Green Paper 'Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational
needs and disability', plus links to progress reports and other related documents

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/send/b0075291/green-paper>