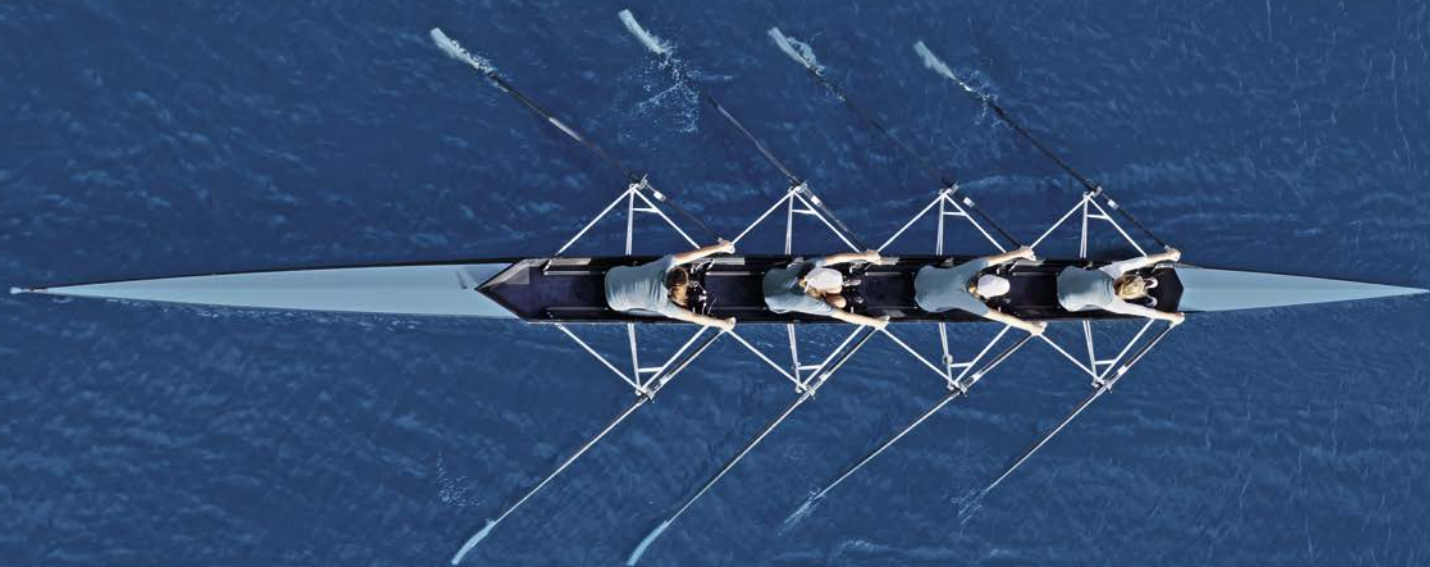


Let's pull together

Because together, we achieve more



Skills and Employment Update 3

December 2014



CHARLOTTE BOSWORTH
DIRECTOR OF SKILLS
AND EMPLOYMENT

“ We Must Make Skills Work

At the Association of Colleges Annual Conference in November, the Shadow Education Secretary, Tristram Hunt MP, announced that, should Labour win the General Election next May, they would publish a new White Paper to reform FE, apprenticeships and vocational qualifications.

The Conservatives are also focusing on this policy area, with the Skills Minister, Nick Boles MP, commissioning the Education and Training Foundation to look at robust alternatives to English and Maths GCSE for vocational training and work.

In amongst what seems like never-ending policy shake-up, we must not lose sight of what is really important – preparing young people for the world of work and helping them reach their potential.

This is our 'line of sight' to work. At OCR, we believe that a well-rounded education

is not just about qualifications, but also about a broad curriculum which will help people learn and develop in their own way.

Of course, robust qualifications have their place but, as much as developing skills is about assessment, it is also about forging character, creativity, resilience, self-esteem, perseverance and confidence. Yes, literacy and numeracy are vital skills which will enable people to succeed in their careers, but they are just part of a toolkit of skills and knowledge our young people need in order to be able to find their own path in an increasingly competitive global workplace.

OCR is committed to pushing the government and stakeholders to ensure we are in the best position to meet these challenges and to work with FE colleges to support the sector through further change.





SKILLS AND THE AUTUMN STATEMENT

Gemma Gathercole, Head of Policy – FE and Funding

You would expect the last autumn statement before a general election to be a little more politically charged than most. And so it was, with announcements on changes to the thresholds of the higher rate of income tax and the personal allowance, which will impact huge numbers of taxpayers, and mentions of devolution of powers to Greater Manchester, Northern Ireland and Scotland. But for FE and Skills, there were, as we should probably have expected, few give-aways.

The most significant announcement relates to apprenticeships: businesses will no longer have to make National Insurance Contributions (NICs) for apprentices under the age of 25. This is an addition to the previously announced policy that NICs would be scrapped for businesses taking on under 21s. It is seen as a mechanism for further incentivising employers to take on younger apprentices and a way of delivering the promise of 3 million apprenticeships in the next parliament that the Prime Minister announced in his party conference speech.

APPRENTICESHIPS

- No National Insurance Contributions for U25 apprentices

JOBS/WORK/BUSINESS

- 500 000 jobs have been created over the past year with unemployment falling by 23% overall
- Unemployment for the young has halved.

STUDENTS/LEARNERS

- Postgraduate students to be eligible for government backed student loan of up to £10k (under 30s only)
- Investment of £20 million to improve careers advice and support for young people.

SCIENCE AND INNOVATION

- £250m towards the establishment of a science centre in Manchester with a number of branches in other northern cities
- Funding for high value research into manufacturing and apprenticeships.

In other announcements that have an indirect impact on the sector we saw a promise of investment in careers advice and support, the extension of loans to post graduate study and additional funding in the wider BIS budget.

On borrowing and the deficit, although there were no specific announcements about budget cuts, the Chancellor did indicate that work on reducing the deficit would continue, with 2015/16 delivering £13.6bn in savings, two further years of austerity to follow and the need for prudent spending in the period beyond. While this doesn't explicitly refer to the FE and Skills budget, we are all aware of the impact of cuts already made, and Vince Cable's speech at the Association of Colleges (AoC) Conference just a few weeks ago reminded us all of the pressure on public finances, the need to find cuts and the difficulties faced by those budgets that are unprotected.

But we must of course await the Skills Funding Statement and the announcement of the 16-19 funding rates from the Education Funding Agency. Last year the Skills Funding Statement wasn't published until February and we've had a promise from the EFA that they hope to confirm rates in January, so we have some time to wait before we have a more detailed picture of what the sector faces in 2015/16. (And then, of course, the election in May may change everything anyway!)



OCR is leading the way on careers advice in Britain and was proud to sponsor the recent Careers Development Institute (CDI) Annual Conference in Glasgow.

THE CHANGING WORLD OF CAREERS ADVICE

The UK (and the world) is seeing the largest change in job occupations ever seen in the UK and OCR believes in its responsibility to provide young people with the tools and guidance to be able to make informed choices about future pathways and progression.

Labour recently carried out a survey of 16-year-olds, and it revealed that 67% were aware of A Levels and only 6% were aware of apprenticeships. With the high cost of attending university and a need for more technical skills, this needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. Careers advisors, universities and employers are realising that there are alternative, skills-based qualifications out there such as OCR's Cambridge Technicals in subjects such as Engineering, IT, Business, Sport, Health & Social Care, Science, Performing Arts, Art & Design and Media.

It is widely acknowledged in the sector that careers guidance in schools has been sadly neglected, doing young people a disservice and it is time for change. In his keynote speech at the recent AoC Conference, Vince Cable was challenged about this and in his response admitted that there were problems, particularly after the demise of Connexions.

Ofsted confirmed at the Westminster Careers Conference that it is inspecting careers guidance provision in schools and colleges and that this will be reflected in HMI reporting. Schools not currently engaged with this will find that they need to address this area as a matter of urgency. They will also find they need to provide destination data and maintain alumni of past students.

OCR OFFERS QUALIFICATIONS IN CAREERS GUIDANCE:

- Career Information and Advice Level 4 Diploma
- Career Guidance and Development Level 6 Diploma

These are aimed at careers advisors and give recognition of professional development for those working in these areas and encourage progression in the sector.

We have a lot to offer colleagues in careers advice and guidance roles and look forward to helping them to achieve professional recognition for this vital role.



Level 3 Cambridge Technicals Reform

Following a successful AoC Conference, we want to update you on the reform of our Level 3 Cambridge Technicals and give you the reassurance that we have the right qualifications to support your students' lifelong learning journey.



Launching for first teaching September 2016, our new Cambridge Technicals will allow your students to achieve their potential and progress to the next stage of their lives, whether it be Higher Education, an apprenticeship, or employment.

The redevelopment of the suite allows us to refresh the content, making sure it's up to date, engaging, fit for purpose and suitable for the needs of your students in 2016 and beyond. To do this we've consulted with universities, employers and industry specialists to make sure that your students will gain the right combination of knowledge, understanding and skills required for the 21st century. We're also making sure that your students will be able to gain English, maths and employability skills through contextualised learning opportunities.

We've made a decision to position the Cambridge Technicals across the 'Applied General' and 'Tech Level' categories outlined in the DfE's technical guidance. Each category has characteristics defined by the DfE in order for the qualification to be recognised in the new Key Stage 5 accountability measures.

Characteristic	KS5 – Level 3 Applied General	KS5 – Level 3 Tech Level
Declared purpose	Applied learning. Taken with other Level 3 qualifications. Entry to higher education.	Specialist learning. Entry to apprenticeship, work, study at higher level.
Minimum size	150 Guided learning hours (GLH)	300 GLH
Appropriate content	60% mandatory content	40% mandatory content. Includes specialist units.
External assessment, minimum	40%	30%
Synoptic assessment	Required	Required
Employer involvement in delivery	Not required	Required
Progression	To higher education	To related employment, apprenticeship, study at higher level

We believe that providing your students with qualifications that are right for their chosen destination will better equip them for the future.

APPLIED GENERAL

You can be confident that we are working with universities to make sure that Cambridge Technicals designed to meet the Applied General characteristics will provide your students with the depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills required for further study in that subject area at Higher Education. These qualifications will include a range of mandatory and optional units.

Initial indications from the general qualifications reform are that 'applied' subjects could cease to exist and that the content of some of the more practical qualifications could change, resulting in a student's practical ability having a limited contribution towards the final grade. Plus, with the increase of examinations, and the introduction of linear rather than modular assessment, the academic A Level route may not suit all of your students.

We're conscious that due to changes in A Level curriculum and assessment, some students who would generally undertake an academic qualification may benefit from taking an Applied General vocational qualification that is designed for progression to Higher Education. We will make sure that we provide you with guidance and support so you can migrate your delivery in order to suit your students' needs.

The Cambridge Technicals suite will include AS and A2 equivalent size qualifications, which will have nested units enabling your students to move

from one size to the other. We're aware that the decoupling of the AS from the A Level may not provide the flexibility you need in order to offer a comprehensive study programme. Therefore, the Cambridge Technicals will provide you with the solution you need in order to give students optionality within their study programme, at the same time as making sure they have a recognised qualification designed to take them to university.

TECH LEVEL

Cambridge Technicals designed to meet the Tech Level characteristics will provide your students with the skills required when starting out in their chosen career. We've worked with key industry employers and experts to make sure the Cambridge Technicals provide your students with the right knowledge and competence required when entering into employment. These qualifications will include a range of mandatory, optional and specialist pathway units, allowing your students to really focus on what is right for their chosen career path.

TECH BACC MEASURE

In addition to the Key Stage 5 performance measure, Cambridge Technicals will also be counted towards the Technical Baccalaureate (Tech Bacc). https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/366677/The_Technical_Baccalaureate_performance_table_measure.pdf.

The Tech Bacc measure has three components:

Level 3 Tech Level qualification
Extended project

Level 3 Maths (including AS and A Level Maths, and Core Maths)

We are able to provide you with all three components to make sure you meet your Tech Bacc measure requirements.

THE CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS SUITE

All qualifications across the Cambridge Technicals suite, regardless of whether they are Applied General or Tech Level, will be co-teachable, allowing for flexibility within the delivery of the study programme.

If your students leave your institution or change their mind about their next destination, they have the opportunity to move between different qualification sizes. Plus, we'll be seeking UCAS recognition for all qualifications within our Cambridge Technicals suite.

In addition, we'll provide you with teaching and learning resources and customer support to assist you in your delivery.

To help you define which of the Cambridge Technicals sits in either the Applied General or Tech Level category, we've adjusted the naming conventions:

Certificates = Applied General

Diplomas = Tech Level.

The following example is taken from the OCR Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in Engineering (first teaching September 2015).

- Every unit in the Engineering suite of qualifications is 60 GLH.
- To support progression Units 1, 2, 3 & 4 appear in all four qualifications – always examined.
- Tech Levels have specialist pathways and more optional units to choose from.

Engineering title OCR Level 3...	Awarding rules	Assessment of mandatory content	Assessment of optional units
Cambridge Technical Certificate – 180 GLH	Need 3 units of which 2 are mandatory units	All examined	All examined
Cambridge Technical Extended Certificate – take over 360 GLH	Need 6 units of which 4 are mandatory units	All examined	Mainly internally assessed – one optional unit is examined
Cambridge Technical Foundation Diploma – take over 540 GLH	Need 9 units of which 5 are mandatory units	3 examined + 2 internally assessed	Mainly internally assessed – one optional unit is examined
Cambridge Technical Diploma – 720 GLH	Need 12 units of which 6 or 7 are mandatory depending on pathway	4 examined + 2 – 3 internally assessed	Mainly internally assessed – one optional unit is examined

ASSESSMENT

The majority of the qualification content will be internally assessed through centre-set assignments created by you. We'll provide you with a range of model assignments across the qualification for you to use or adapt where necessary. Alternatively, you can create your own assignment to reflect your local area and needs that are relevant to your centre; plus, you can use our assignment – checking service to make sure you're on the right lines. We're working with subject experts to make sure that, for externally assessed units, we create assessment solutions that retain the vocational nature of the qualification and are relevant to the sector. External

assessment could take many forms, including:

- performance or demonstration
- project
- written examination.

External assessment will be set and marked by us. There will be two opportunities for your students to take the assessments so you can decide when they are ready.

TIMESCALES FOR REDEVELOPING CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS

We are redeveloping our current suite of Cambridge Technicals so that they will meet the characteristics defined by the DfE in order for the qualification to be recognised in the new Key Stage 5 accountability measures. The DfE is easing in the

new measures, allowing a phased approach to redevelopment of vocational qualifications. This means that:

- the current Level 3 Cambridge Technicals that don't have external assessment can count towards the new measures up to certification in 2017
- new subjects for first teaching in 2015, and that count in measures from 2017, have to include external assessment and meet all of the other characteristics
- redeveloped Cambridge Technicals (and all other Level 3 qualifications) for first teaching in 2016, and that count in measures from 2018, have to include external assessment and meet all of the other characteristics.

Teaching begins on a two-year programme	Cambridge Technical qualification certificated in		
	Summer 2016	Summer 2017	Summer 2018 onwards
September 2014 Subjects available (current suite): Art & Design, Business, Health & Social Care, IT, Media, Performing Arts, Sport.	Current suite – 100% internal assessment	–	–
September 2015 1st teaching of OCR's new subjects in new assessment model: Engineering and Science. Last starts for full-time two-year programme on current suite.		Engineering & Science external & internal assessment (DfE full characteristic). Current suite unchanged	
September 2016 1st teaching of redeveloped subjects: Business, Health & Social Care, IT, Sport, etc.			All subjects must meet full characteristics

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS AT LEVEL 2

The DfE's final stage of review of vocational qualifications for 16 – 19-year-olds will result in changes to Level 2 vocational qualifications that mean they must meet the

same characteristics as Tech Level qualifications at Level 3. Level 2 qualifications that count towards Key Stage 5 accountability measures will be classified as Technical Certificates. We are planning the redevelopment of our suite of Level 2

Cambridge Technicals. If you would like to contribute and feed into the development process, please call **02476 851509** or email: vocational.qualifications@ocr.org.uk.



Cambridge Progression qualifications – helping your learners achieve more



I'm sure you've heard of the saying 'If you do what you've always done, then you get what you've always got'. The same is true of English and maths learning. If a learner didn't get a C or above at GCSE on the first attempt and the only intervention they receive is the same style and format of teaching that didn't work for them before, then it's unlikely that they will progress. An effective programme would identify the weaknesses in the learner's underpinning maths and English skills, teach them those skills, and then show them how to apply those skills in GCSE or how to develop process skills to lead to functional skills.

This is where OCR Cambridge Progression comes in

Cambridge Progression qualifications and units in English and maths are an ideal way to address your learners' underpinning skills gaps and help encourage them to progress to Functional Skills or GCSEs. Our approach means that your teaching can focus on the specific skills your

learners need and that learners are able to progress with confidence.

While the whole Cambridge Progression suite is funded, there are differences in how you access this funding. Qualifications at Entry Level (EL) and Level 1 (L1) are funded as long as they are 3 credits or larger; at Level 2 (L2), only the Certificate-sized qualification is funded as L2

qualifications must be 13 credits or larger. Units that are 1 or 2 credits are available through the unit offer. We have included details on which learning aim you should use for each in the table on our website ocr.org.uk/englishandmaths.

Funding – all you need to know

Funding is also available as part of the unit offer for all units of larger qualifications that are approved. The guidance can be found on the SFA website.

The Cambridge Progression suite of qualifications meet the funding requirements and are fundable for learners seeking to improve their English and maths skills.

All qualifications within the Cambridge Progression suite, from EL 1 to 2 are eligible for funding.

Qualifications at EL and L1 that are 3 credits or larger and the Certificate-sized qualifications at Level 2 meet the new business rules. Individual units that are 1 or 2 credits and all L2 units are available as part of the unit offer. We recommend you use the unit reference number as the learning aim for individual units and the qualification number as the learning aim for Certificate qualifications. Full details and a step-by-step guide to finding funding can be found on our website ocr.org.uk/englishandmaths

The Education Funding Agency has just published a note explaining how to access the list of qualifications that meet the funding condition on the provision of maths and English. Here is a link to the webpage :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/condition-of-funding-on-maths-and-english-qualifications-list>

CASE STUDY 1

Joe Smith, 16. GCSE results (English D, Maths F). Initial assessment (English L1, Maths E3)

ACTIONS:

Joe is given an L2 English Diagnostic Assessment (Ofsted says learners must be placed on a programme the level above their Initial Assessment). Skills gaps identified in reading comprehension, grammar, spelling, writing complex sentences.

He is given an L1 Maths Diagnostic Assessment. Skills gaps identified in fractions, calculations, measurement and time.

Two-year action plan. First-year Study Programme: Individualised Learner Record (ILR) aim Functional Skills English L2 and using three L2 Cambridge Progression English units to secure underpinning skills first part of year, then in second half, Functional Skills delivery. Second year – ILR aim GCSE English. First year Study Programme – ILR aim Functional Skills maths Level 1 and three L1 Cambridge Progression maths units first part of year, then in second half, Functional Skills. Second year – ILR aim Functional Skills maths level 2 and appropriate Cambridge Progression maths units.

Joe will only be placed on a GCSE Maths Study Programme when the college is confident that Joe will succeed. From the original EL 3 score, it will realistically take a third year of learning before he has mastered the L2 underpinning skills needed to begin a GCSE Maths Study Programme.

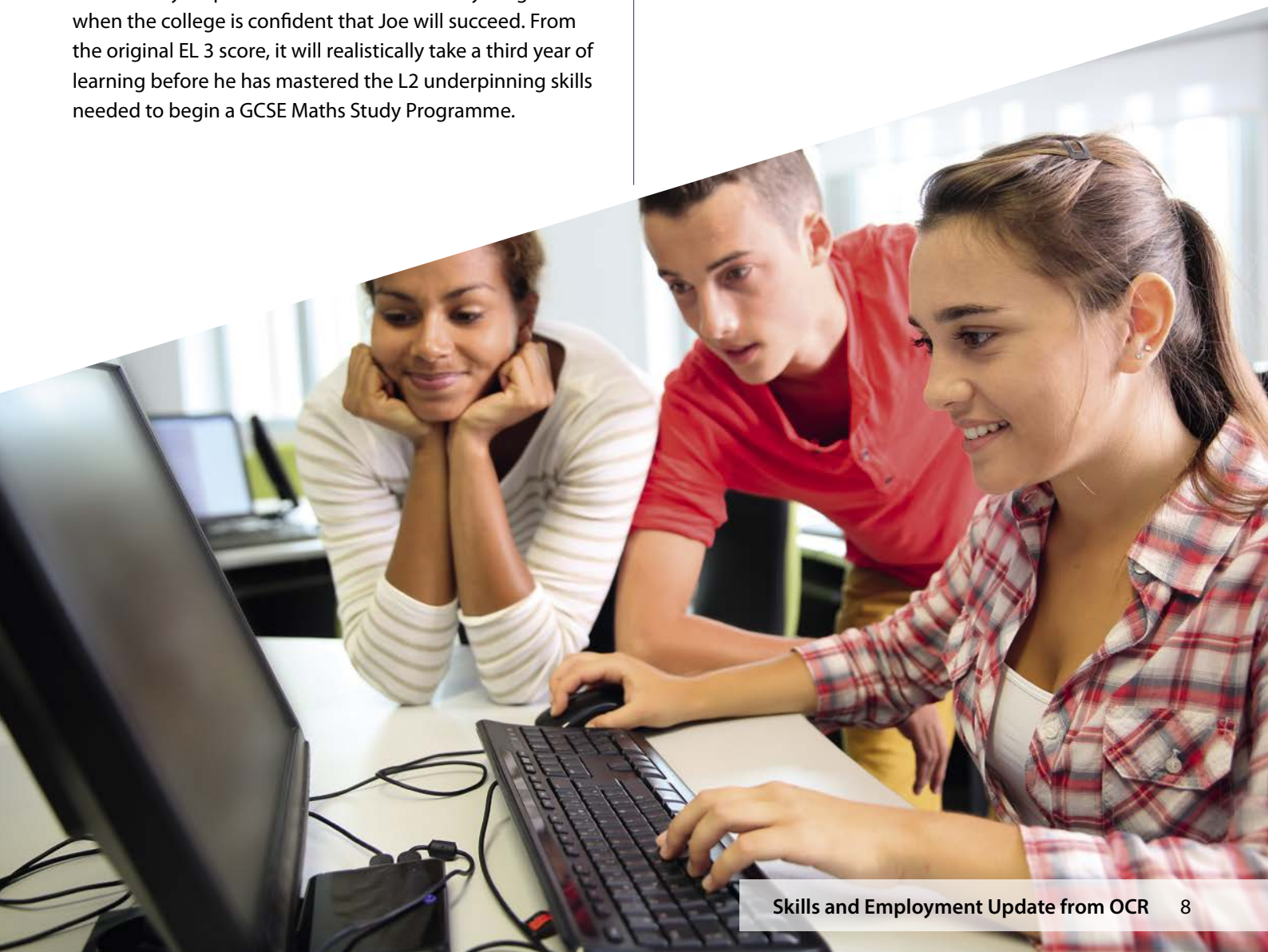
CASE STUDY 2

Emily Jones, 16. GCSE results (English – C) (maths – D). Initial Assessment (English – L1) (maths – L1)

ACTIONS:

Although Emily's Initial Assessment shows that she is not secure in her L2 skills, she has achieved a C grade in English so won't receive any more funding at L2. Emily is given an L2 Maths Diagnostic Assessment. Skills gaps identified – fractions, data interpretation.

Because there were few skills gaps and Emily is motivated, the centre decides to place Emily on a GCSE Maths Study Programme. She will do two Cambridge Progression units at the beginning of the year which are contextualised into the GCSE programme. She has to be secure in these underpinning skills to be able to fully participate in the GCSE learning. The centre is confident that she will succeed with her Maths GCSE retake. If they weren't confident because she had too many L2 skills gaps, they would have placed her on an L2 Functional Skills Maths Study Programme and waited until the second year to enrol her for GCSE Maths.





HOW MANY CENTRES GET THEIR ENGLISH AND MATHS DELIVERY RIGHT?

AT OCR, WE HAVE SEEN A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF COLLEGES STRUGGLING THIS YEAR BECAUSE OF LOW ENGLISH AND MATHS SUCCESS RATES THAT HAVE PULLED DOWN THEIR WHOLE COLLEGE SUCCESS RATE. HOWEVER, THERE ARE MANY COLLEGES GETTING IT RIGHT AND SUPPORTING THEIR LEARNERS TOWARDS GOOD ENGLISH AND MATHS ACHIEVEMENTS. WHAT ARE THEY DOING RIGHT THAT THOSE OTHER COLLEGES CAN LEARN FROM? THIS IS AN OVERVIEW OF WHAT OUR SECTOR SPECIALIST FOR ENGLISH AND MATHS HAS SEEN AS SHE VISITS AND SUPPORTS COLLEGES WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR ENGLISH AND MATHS PROGRAMMES.

The first key

ingredient is that centre Senior Management Teams (SMTs) show excellent leadership skills by actively supporting their Vocational and English and Maths teams to work together. If the SMT does not understand that a whole college approach to moving up the English and maths standard is necessary then single departments or individuals have little hope of progressing this agenda.

The second key

ingredient is staff training. It is of little use for an SMT to say to all staff, go forth and deliver and embed English and maths – and then hope for the best. Investment in relevant and targeted staff training is needed for both the Vocational staff and the English and maths staff. Being imaginative and often tapping into a centre's own skilled knowledge or exchanging staff within local groups proves that it doesn't have to cost a fortune.

What does the training look like? For Vocational staff – supporting their own English and maths skills development – if needed, and then, how to support and mark English and maths skills within vocational projects.

All staff are shown how to unpick English and maths skills from within vocational topics and how to explicitly and confidently teach these skills to their learners. For English and maths tutors, centres ensure these tutors have the skills to deliver all English and maths skills from EL to pre-GCSE. The centres identify those staff that can deliver at GCSE level and provide support for them to gain the necessary knowledge. People often assume EL English and maths skills are easy to deliver. They are not! They require specialist knowledge, particularly when delivering to teens and adults who still haven't acquired these skills.

Some colleges have created areas on their college IT networks where all tutors and learners can tap into CPD resources and English and maths materials. A number of colleges deliver online programmes using webinars within their centres at designated times of the day. This means that targeted English and math skills delivery can be accessed from vocational areas. There are some excellent resources that centres have researched and purchased to use online. Centres' own staff have created relevant resources of a high standard too. These are shared across the centre.

SMTs give support to Vocational and English and maths staff to work collaboratively. This could be through changes in the timetable, extra meeting time for development work for contextualised schemes of work and resources. Peer and mentoring support is also used in which English and maths tutors can go into classrooms to support Vocational tutors with delivering particular English and maths skills until the Vocational staff are confident to deliver these skills on their own.

The final key

ingredient is that centres ensure that all their learners have robust initial and diagnostic assessment. Learners are placed on the appropriate level English and maths programmes. These centres are confident that all learners are secure in their L2 underpinning English and maths skills before they place them on an L2 Functional Skills or GCSE programme. In other words, learners are only placed on appropriate programmes that the centre knows these learners will be able to achieve.

OCR has developed materials for the whole-college English and maths solution. If your college would like advice and guidance from our Sector Specialist in English and maths, please contact Sue Salter on 02476 851509



Piloting Cambridge Technicals overseas from January 2015

CENTRES IN MAURITIUS AND IN ZIMBABWE WILL PILOT CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS IN IT AND SPORT FROM JANUARY 2015.

Cambridge Technicals as part of an innovative new 16 - 18 learning programme in Mauritius

OCR has worked closely with colleagues from its sister organisation Cambridge International and the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate to offer Level 3 **Cambridge Technicals** in IT as one of the compulsory courses students have to complete in order to achieve an alternative new learning programme for 16 - 18-year-olds. This learning programme also includes a number of Cambridge International AS and A Levels, as well as 5 weeks' work experience across the two year course. This alternative learning programme is certificated by an overarching certificate, the Higher School Certificate Professional, which will be on a par with the academic Higher School Certificate, the only academic route offered until now to 16 - 18-year-olds in Mauritius.

Cambridge Technicals in IT and Sport in St John's School, Harare, Zimbabwe

OCR is also piloting Level 3 Cambridge Technicals in IT and Sport in one school in Zimbabwe from January 2015. Remote teacher training has successfully taken place over the past few months, allowing both trainers in the UK and teachers in Zimbabwe to develop key 21st century communication skills in the process. Teachers in St John's School have also been using the e-community network to seek advice and share best practice with fellow schools in the UK, allowing the vibrant e-community to expand its boundaries across the world.

Growing international demand for high-quality qualifications such as Cambridge Technicals clearly indicates that finding solutions for the skills race is a truly global issue.



Building transferable skills and mindsets within study programmes

The introduction of study programmes has been a significant change in the way students are funded 16 - 19. It has also provided an opportunity to reflect on the whole offer to learners to ensure that they are fully prepared for their next stage of learning and, ultimately, for employment.

There is broad agreement around the skills and mindsets required by employers which include communication, teamwork, presentation, leadership, planning and decision-making skills. We would also add resilience, determination and grit as essential in surviving today's job market. The notion of a job for life is increasingly antiquated and, where an individual has multiple careers, the requirement to be highly skilled, versatile and adaptable is a must.

So, how does this fit with study programmes? There is now a great opportunity to include qualifications such as OCR's Being Entrepreneurial in addition to substantial qualifications like Cambridge Technicals or A Levels. OCR has worked with employers and entrepreneurs to create this innovative suite. These key employability skills are developed through practical and fun learning activities that encourage learners to problem solve, research solutions, cope with change and communicate clearly with stakeholders. There is no examined content – we believe the way you demonstrate these skills is through assessed and moderated activities with recognition through an OCR qualification. The qualifications are available at Level 2 and 3 and require 100 GLH.

For further information on OCR's Being Entrepreneurial qualification go to:

ocr.org.uk/beingentrepreneurial