

AoC 16-19 Study Programmes Survey Report



1. Introduction

As part of a DfE funded project, AoC has undertaken research into 16-19 Study Programmes. The first phase of this research was a survey, the aim of which was to:

- **Gather data** on Study Programme development and implementation;
- Capture College views and perceptions of any **challenges** faced and their **approaches to overcoming these**;
- Identify examples of **innovative approaches** to developing Study Programmes that meet the Study Programme principles and the needs of students.

The second phase of the research was to follow up on survey responses in order to develop a set of AoC produced **case studies** on key aspects of Study Programmes which have been compiled into a **Good Practice Guide** for Colleges.

The Guide is a **web-based** resource and we hope that further examples of Study Programmes, at all levels across a wide range of curriculum areas, will be added in due course.

Key areas to be covered by case studies are:

- Work Experience
- Maths and English
- Study Programmes at Level 3 (Academic)
- Study Programmes at Level 3 (Vocational)
- Study Programmes at Level 2
- Study Programmes at Level 1
- Study Programmes at Entry level/for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Traineeships
- Supported Internships
- Other non-qualification activity (tutorials, enrichment, personal and social development)

2. Response rate

This survey was distributed to all General Further Education, Sixth Form, Tertiary and Specialist Colleges in AoC membership - 341 Colleges in total, 96% of the College sector. Of these 87 Colleges responded giving a response rate of 26%. This is a good response rate for a survey of this kind, particularly as Colleges were only given one week for completion due to the very short timescales of the project.

Type	Number of Responses	Number of Colleges in England	Percent within Type
General Further Education College	71	219	32%
Sixth Form College	13	94	14%
Specialist Designated College	3	28	11%
Total	87	341	26%

Region	Number of Responses	Number of Colleges in England	Percent within Region
Eastern Region	3	31	10%
East Midlands	6	22	27%
Greater London	8	50	16%
North East	9	20	45%
North West	16	56	29%
South East	11	59	19%
South West	11	28	39%
West Midlands	9	42	21%
Yorkshire & Humber	14	33	42%
Total	87	341	26%

The Report will be presented using the headings in the survey, as follows:

- Section 1 – General Information
- Section 2 – Main Qualification
- Section 3 – Maths and English
- Section 4 - Work Experience
- Section 5 – Non-qualification Activity
- Conclusions and recommendations

3. Section 1 - General Information

i) What is your Colleges' approximate anticipated 16-18 recruitment for September 2013

The data returned shows that respondents anticipated intake of 16-18 year olds varies between 50 and 6,840 students, with an average intake of 2,303 students per College.

ii) Approximately how many second year continuing students will you have?

Data from respondents shows that the anticipated numbers of continuing, second year students will vary between 35 and 2,200 students, with an average of 779 students per College.

So, on average, Colleges will be implementing Study Programmes for circa 3,000 students in September.

iii) **What percentage of the new intake do you anticipate will *not* have achieved A*-C GCSE maths?**

What percentage of the new intake in do you anticipate will not have acheived A*-C grade GCSE maths?	Number of responses	Percent
0%-10%	7	8%
11%-20%	5	6%
21%-30%	9	10%
31%-40%	9	10%
41%-50%	18	21%
More than 50%	38	44%
Total	86	100%

This table shows that 44% of respondents anticipate that over 50% of their 16-18 intake in September will not have achieved a C grade in GCSE maths, 65% anticipate that more than 40% will not have done so, and 75% that over 30% will not have done so. Given that the average College first year intake is 2,303 students this highlights the scale of the task facing Colleges.

iv) **What percentage of the new intake do you anticipate will *not* have achieved A*-C GCSE English?**

What percentage of the new intake in do you anticipate will not have acheived A*-C grade GCSE English?	Number of responses	Percent
0%-10%	7	8%
11%-20%	6	7%
21%-30%	10	12%
31%-40%	15	17%
41%-50%	23	27%
More than 50%	25	29%
Total	86	100%

This table shows that 29% of respondents anticipate that over 50% of their 16-18 intake in September will not have achieved a C grade in GCSE English, 56% anticipate that more than 40% will not have done so, and 73% that over 30% will not have done so. Again, this shows the scale of the task facing Colleges.

v) **How many hours are you allocating to Study Programmes for new students in 2013?**

How many hours are you allocating to Study Programmes for new students in 2013?	Number of responses	Percent
Less than 540	3	4%
540-600	60	71%
Range from 540-600 + (max 882)	11	13%
600+	10	12%
Total	84	100%

Only 3 Colleges, 4% of respondents, are making use of the EFA flexibility for 2013 and allocating fewer than 540 hours to Study Programmes for new students in September. The majority are allocating 540-600 hours and a significant minority; at least 12% but probably more, are allocating in excess of 600 hours.

vi) How many hours are you allocating to continuing second year students in 2013, if different?

How many hours are you allocating to continuing second year students in 2013, if different?	Number of responses	Percent
Less than 540	5	6%
540-600	63	75%
Range from 540-600 + (max 882)	11	13%
600+	5	6%
Total	84	100%

For second year students 6% of respondents are allocating fewer than 540 hours in line with EFA flexibilities for 2013. As with first year students, the vast majority (75%) are allocating 540-600 hours and again, a significant minority are exceeding 600 hours.

4. Section 2 – Main qualification

i) Will Study Programmes at all levels include a substantial qualification?

Will Study Programmes at the levels below include a substantial qualification? (Please tick one box in each row)	All	Some	None	Total
Level 3 (Academic)	88%	4%	7%	100%
Level 3 (Vocational)	94%	5%	1%	100%
Level 2	93%	4%	4%	100%
Level 1	65%	32%	4%	100%
Entry Level / LLDD	32%	59%	9%	100%

Between 88-94% of programmes at levels 2 and 3 will include a substantial qualification. This drops to 65% at level 1 and to 32% at Entry level. This is in-line with Study Programme principles which allow Colleges to develop programmes suited to the needs of the student and which may be based on work experience rather than qualifications, particularly at lower levels.

ii) Are you planning for any content to be delivered on-line?

Are you planning for any content to be delivered on-line? (Please tick one box in each row)	Yes	No	Total
Level 3 (Academic)	30%	70%	100%
Level 3 (Vocational)	35%	65%	100%
Level 2	26%	74%	100%
Level 1	17%	83%	100%
Entry Level / LLDD	6%	94%	100%

On-line delivery is planned for the minority of programmes, and is more likely to be part of delivery in level 2 and 3 programmes (26-35%) than in levels 1 and below (6-17%).

However, comments from respondents indicate that on-line delivery occurs across all curriculum areas, including for functional skills, provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD), tutorial and ESOL. Many respondents indicated that they are developing on-line delivery as part of Study Programme development.

Are you planning for any content to be self-directed?

Are you planning for any content to be self-directed? (Please tick one box in each row)	Yes	No	Total
Level 3 (Academic)	55%	45%	100%
Level 3 (Vocational)	57%	43%	100%
Level 2	39%	61%	100%
Level 1	14%	86%	100%
Entry Level / LLDD	6%	94%	100%

Self-directed study forms part of just over half of study programmes at level 3, but is only planned for a minority of programmes at Level 2, Level 1 and below.

iii) What challenges, if any, have you faced in deciding on the main qualification?

61 Colleges responded to this open question, and of those 63% identified challenges whilst the remaining 27% said they had faced no challenges.

The most commonly identified challenges were:

- Insufficient availability of suitable qualifications at levels 1 and below;
- Fitting everything in to 600 hours and the funding envelope.
- Some particular difficulties in areas with large vocational programmes i.e. hospitality and catering;
- Difficulties with programmes of x4 AS levels which take all of the available hours, leaving no time for other elements of Study Programmes;
- Difficulties identifying the ‘main’ qualification in AS and A level programmes;
- Concerns about audit where Colleges are not delivering a qualification;
- The divergence of funding methodology between ages 16-18 and 19+.

iv) How have you overcome these challenges?

Some suggested solutions include:

- Some Colleges indicated that they are running programmes over 600 hours and are bearing the costs themselves, but this is not a long term solution;
- Others are using and developing the use of e-learning and other innovative methods of delivery;
- Merging classes for common unit delivery;
- Reviewing the curriculum and removing small programmes that have been used as additionality;
- Cross subsidisation with A2 subsidising AS;
- Looking for alternative qualifications/awarding organisations with glh requirements in-line with Study Programme hours;
- Re-designing tutorial and enrichment

- v) **Do you have an example of innovative practice in the design of Study Programmes or selection of the main qualification, at any level or in any curriculum area, that you would be willing to share with other Colleges?**

Sixteen Colleges offered examples of innovative practice a selection of which have been drawn together to contribute to a series of case studies which are available on the AoC website.

5. Section 3 – Maths and English

- i) **What maths qualifications do you intend to deliver to those without a C Grade GCSE in maths?**

What maths qualifications do you intend to deliver to those without a C Grade GCSE in maths? (Please tick all that apply)	Number of responses	Percent
GCSE	74	93%
Functional Skills	72	90%
Free standing maths qualifications	34	43%
Other	5	6%
Total	80	100%

90-93% of respondents will be offering GCSE and Functional Skills maths, with 43% offering Free Standing Maths qualifications. The 6% providing other maths qualifications include Basic Skills numeracy and College certificated courses.

- ii) **What English qualifications do you intend to deliver to those without a C Grade GCSE in English?**

What maths qualifications do you intend to deliver to those without a C Grade GCSE in English? (Please tick all that apply)	Number of responses	Percent
GCSE	74	93%
Functional Skills	76	95%
ESOL	33	41%
Other	6	8%
Total	80	100%

93-95% of respondents will be offering GCSE and Functional Skills English, and 41% will offer ESOL programmes. Other qualifications include Basic Skills literacy, iGCSE, and the level 2 Extended Project Qualification alongside Functional Skills.

- iii) **How many 'planned, timetabled, organised' hours per year will you allocate to:**

Level 2 maths: It was not possible to detect any pattern in the allocation of hours to maths, other than to say that the hours given ranged from 30 to 144, sometimes within a College. In some cases more hours were allocated to GCSE, but in others more were given to Functional Skills.

Level 2 English: As above

This wide variation in hours reflects the complexity facing Colleges that are enrolling large numbers of students with a wide range of prior attainment in English and maths, and need to differentiate their offer to meet the needs of these students.

iv) What have been the main challenges to planning the delivery of maths and English to all those below a C grade GCSE?

87% of respondents highlighted challenges with planning the delivery of maths and English. The major challenges cited include:

- Logistical issues because of the sheer size of the intake who will not have achieved this level at school, and the impact on timetabling given the wide ability range;
- Staffing and the need for more teachers, re-training and CPD;
- The offer itself – the need for pre-GCSE stepping stone qualifications, and the need to contextualise;
- Diagnostics and initial assessment – the need to ensure students are on the correct course for them;
- The culture change that is needed and how to motivate students and ensure attendance and success.

v) How have you overcome these challenges?

Suggestions include:

- Reinforcing key messages about the importance of maths and English;
- Summer packages for students prior to the start of term;
- Maths and English Champions and co-ordinators in all teams;
- Common timetabling as part of a cross-college approach;
- In-depth diagnostics;
- Embedding into the vocational area/main area of study;
- Separate maths and English areas in the College.

vi) Do you have an example of innovative practice in either maths or English or both, that you would be willing to share with other Colleges?

Sixteen Colleges offered examples of innovative practice a selection of which have been draw together to contribute to the case studies.

6. Section 4 - Work Experience

i) Are you offering work experience in Study Programmes at each level?

Are you offering work experience in Study Programmes at each level? (Please tick one box in each row)	Yes	No	Total
Level 3 (Academic)	54%	46%	100%
Level 3 (Vocational)	92%	8%	100%
Level 2	92%	8%	100%
Level 1	91%	9%	100%
Entry Level / LLDD	83%	17%	100%

90-92% of respondents are offering work experience in their Level 2 and Level 3 vocational Study Programmes, and 83% are offering work experience at Entry Level.

However, only 54% of respondents are planning to include work experience in their Level 3 Academic Study Programmes.

ii) Are there any particular curriculum areas where you will not be offering work experience or are finding it difficult to arrange?

Are there any particular curriculum areas where you will not be offering work experience or are finding it difficult to arrange?	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	41	56%
No	32	44%
Total	73	100%

48% of respondents provided further information to this question. The main points made include:

- The curriculum area least likely to offer work experience is A level provision;
- Other curriculum areas where provision of work experience is identified as problematic are in provision for students with LDD, in sport and leisure, art and design, construction, ICT and business and engineering;
- Many Colleges indicated that they will be providing opportunities in College public-facing facilities, work-related learning, other in-house opportunities, and work 'exposure';
- By far the biggest issue reported is the lack of employers and capacity issues.

iii) In addition to work experience with and employer do you offer any of the following:

In addition to work experience with and employer do you offer any of the following? (Please tick all that apply)	Number of responses	Percent
73 Experience of working with the public in a College facility (i.e. hair salon, restaurant)	69	86%
Simulation in a realistic working environment (i.e. kitchen, construction, engineering)	64	80%
Student visit to employers premises	73	91%
Invite employers into the College for talks	78	98%
Commissioned project for an employer	58	73%
Other	20	25%
Total	80	

It is clear from the table that 80-98% of Colleges offer experience of working in College public-facing facilities, simulation and other work related activity.

iv) Are you planning to offer Traineeships in September?

Are you planning to offer Traineeships in September?	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	45	56%
No	35	44%
Total	80	100%

56% of respondents are planning to offer Traineeships to 16-18 year olds in September.

v) Are you planning to offer Supported Internships for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in September?

Are you planning to offer Supported Internships for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in September?	Number of responses	Percent
Yes	30	38%
No	49	62%
Total	79	100%

38% of respondents are planning to offer Supported Internships in September.

vi) What have been the major challenges in developing work experience opportunities for your students?

77% of respondents identified challenges in meeting the Study Programme work experience requirements. These include:

- By far the largest number of responses and greatest reported difficulty is in finding sufficient employers, particularly given the large volumes involved;
- Logistics were the second most frequently reported difficulty – including the need to develop a cross-College centralised approach, staffing, setting up placements, recording, tracking, monitoring and evaluating placements;
- Ensuring the work experience is meaningful and that employers understand what is required;
- The transport costs;
- The impact on Apprenticeship places, and the impact on other aspects of the student's programme i.e. the main qualification or maths and English.

vii) How have you overcome these?

Although this is seen as a difficult area 61% of respondents gave suggestions as to how they are planning to overcome some of these hurdles. Suggested ways include:

- Expanding employer engagement activity, including working with Education Business
- Partnerships and other outside agencies;
- Developing the College's employability strategy to embed employability and enterprise across the College;
- Developing alternatives to external work experience;
- Developing Job Clubs, Job Shops and in-College recruitment agencies and getting employers in to the College;

- Developing a cross-College approach and appointing new staff and dedicated teams;
- 'Fill the Gap' scheme in which employers providing apprenticeships take work experience students on the day the Apprentice is in College;
- Use of the 16-19 Bursary for travel expenses.

viii) Do you have examples of innovation or good practice in relation to work experience, Traineeships or Supported Internships that you would be willing to share with other Colleges?

Twenty-six Colleges offered examples of innovative practice; eight of which were for Supported Internships and two for Traineeships. A selection of these have been used to develop case studies.

7. Section 5 – Non-qualification activity

i) Have you faced any particular challenges in non-qualification activity (i.e. tutorial, enrichment, personal and social development)?

74% of respondents answered this question, but of these 60% reported no challenges with most welcoming the flexibility that Study Programmes give to this area.

Challenges identified included:

- Fitting this into the 600 hours;
- Balancing qualification and non-qualification activity;
- Concerns about auditable evidence;
- Challenges around the use of VLE and timetabling.

ii) How have you overcome these?

45% of those who responded to this question offered suggestions about how they are dealing with this area. Suggestions include:

- Modifying existing tutorial programmes;
- Additional tracking facilities;
- Appointing new learning and progression mentors;
- Taking the best practice from previous additionality;
- Development of peer mentoring and work shadowing;
- Business start-up lounges;
- Appointment of a student liaison officer with responsibility for volunteering.

iii) Do you have an example of innovation or good practice that you would be willing to share with other Colleges?

Thirteen Colleges offered examples of innovative practice some of which have been developed into case studies.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

The responses to the survey demonstrate that Colleges understand the principles of 16-19 Study programmes, and are reviewing their 16-19 provision to ensure that they meet them. Many have stated that they welcome the new flexibilities that the introduction of Study Programmes along

with the funding changes, have brought. However, they also highlight concerns, mainly in relation to the scale of changes needed by September 2013. With average recruitment of 2,303 first year students and 779 continuing second year students, Colleges are introducing Study Programmes to approximately 3,000 students on average.

Programme size:

96% of respondents are allocating at least 540 hours to first year students, 94% to second year students, with only 4-6% making use of the flexibility offered by EFA of 450-540 hours for 2013/14. A significant minority of Colleges report that they are 'over delivering' and allocating more hours than they are funded for in 2013.

Some of the substantial qualifications particularly at Level 3 (AS levels and large Vocational qualifications) take up the whole 600 hours leaving little, if any, time for the other elements including maths and/or English, work experience and non-qualification activity such as tutorial and enrichment. Many Colleges report that they are developing on-line and self-directed learning but this does represent a loss of direct contact time for students on these programmes.

At lower levels, whilst many Colleges welcome the flexibility to develop non-qualification based programmes, many report a shortage of substantial qualifications at these levels. Some also express concerns about how they will be audited for non-qualification based programmes.

Recommendations:

- 1. Colleges should be supported to develop on-line learning, for qualification and for non-qualification activity, to support the delivery of large programmes.**
- 2. DfE should ensure that funding audit and Ofsted requirements do not inhibit the desired flexibility of Study Programmes.**

Maths and English:

Provision of maths and English is a significant issue, with 44% of respondents reporting that the majority of their first year intake will require Level 2 maths and 29% English. They report very significant logistical issues in dealing with the volume of young people who have failed to achieve these at school, as well as difficulties in finding suitably experienced and qualified staff.

Recommendations:

- 1. There is an urgent need for a national initiative to encourage the recruitment of new staff to deliver maths and English, as well as funded CPD and up-skilling of existing staff.**
- 2. Colleges would welcome the coherent development of stepping stone qualifications**
- 3. towards the full GCSE, as well as reliable diagnostic assessment tools to ensure**
- 4. students are on the correct programme.**

Work experience:

The major challenge reported with provision of meaningful work experience is difficulty in finding sufficient employers. Whilst Colleges are planning work experience for over 90% of vocational students at Levels 1-3, and 83% to Entry Level student, only 54% of Colleges are delivering work experience to A level students. Many Colleges reported that they are actively developing work-related learning and in-house provision, in addition to external work experience.

Recommendations:

1. Whilst we understand that the ultimate goal is for students to have the opportunity for external work experience, we would urge DfE and Ofsted to recognise the value of a range of work related activity on route to this and to consider some agreed definitions for work experience that encompass experience in College businesses where this is appropriate.
2. A national campaign to encourage employers to provide work experience, along with development of a Work Experience Kite Mark, should be considered.
3. Public Sector and Government contracts with employers should include a commitment to provide work experience to 16- 18 year olds.
4. There have been some mixed messages about whether Level 3 Academic Study Programmes should include work experience, and we suggest that there is a need for clarity.
5. Funding is needed to support the costs of transport to work experience placements.