

Supporting 14-19 Diploma students applying to UCAS



The 14-19 Diplomas were first introduced in September 2008. The Diploma offers a unique blend of theoretical and practical learning which allows you to study in work-related settings; both real and simulated.

In the summer of 2010 the first groups of Diploma learners completed their qualification, of those Diploma learners who applied to Higher Education, over 67% were accepted which broadly similar to the national average of UCAS applicant acceptances. However, UCAS identified that there a small number of issues which have made it difficult for HE admissions tutors to identify Diploma applications from the information presented to them by the Apply system, as these were not in a standard format. As a consequence, UCAS have produced a best practice guide demonstrating how to complete a UCAS application to standardise the method of applying.

UCAS strongly encourages you to use this guide, as admissions tutors will be informed of the content and expect to see applications presented as the guide describes. For the full guide please see: www.ucas.ac.uk/documents/ucasguides/diplomas-guidingstudents.pdf

Using the staff area of Apply, shorten the list of qualifications which the student can select

Ensure that the following qualifications are selected on your school/college's qualifications list. These can be set up in the staff area of Apply:

- Advanced Diploma (14-19 Level 3) ensure you also include in this list the Additional and Specialist Learning qualifications which your school, college or consortia offers as part of the group award.
- Progression Diploma (14-19 Level 3)
- Extended Project (Level 3)

Through shortening the list of qualifications the student can select, there will be less choice for the student when selecting their qualifications. This will increase the likelihood that the student will complete the application form correctly.

Before sending the application to UCAS, check that Diploma students have selected the following:

Advanced Diploma students

- Advanced Diploma (14-19 Level 3), with the correct title of the qualification selected
- Extended Project (Level 3), with a title/short description of their Extended Project.
- Additional and Specialist Learning qualification: A level, BTEC etc.

Progression Diploma students

- Progression Diploma (14-19 Level 3), with the correct title of the qualification selected
- Extended Project labelled Extended Project (Level 3), with a title/short description of their Extended Project.

- Students need not indicate that they are studying Principal Learning or Functional Skills in the qualification section as these awards are incorporated in the overall Advanced Diploma award.
- The Extended Project should be presented separately as this is individual to each student and may be particularly relevant to the course the student is hoping to study.
- Check that students have also entered any other qualifications which they have previously studied or taken outside of their Diploma award, for example GCSEs, additional A levels outside of the Diploma Additional and Specialist Learning qualification etc.

If there are mistakes and students have not completed their qualifications as described above, please ask your student to rectify their application before sending it to UCAS.

Before sending the application to UCAS, check - the student's personal statement

To help admission tutors to identify the student's application, ensure that they make reference to the qualification somewhere in their personal statement and suggest Advanced Diploma students indicate which qualification they are taking for their Additional and Specialist Learning.

Advice for teachers when writing a reference for a 14-19 Diploma student

In addition to the advice above, UCAS recommends that you include a short description of the qualification within your adviser reference. You should also describe what the student is undertaking as part of their studies in as much detail as you see fit, particularly mentioning the Additional and Specialist Learning and if appropriate a more full description of the achievements in Principal Learning and the Extended Project. Below are two examples which demonstrate how this might be done for Advanced and Progression Diploma students. Please feel free to use this as a template for your own references:

Advanced Diploma

Joe Bloggs is studying the 14-19 Advanced Diploma. The Diploma is a new group award qualification which consists of a number of standalone qualifications including Principal Learning, Extended Project, Functional Skills and Additional and Specialist Learning. To complete the award, Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills are also required, as is a minimum of 10 days' work experience. In its entirety, the Advanced Diploma is the equivalent of 3.5 A levels. Joe is studying the Advanced Diploma in Creative and Media which includes an A level in Art as his Additional and Specialist Learning. His Extended Project has explored the use of photography in the media.

Progression Diploma

Joe Bloggs is studying the 14-19 Progression Diploma. The Diploma is a new group award qualification which consists of a number of standalone qualifications including Principal Learning, Extended Project and Functional Skills. To complete the award, Assisting 14-19 Diploma applicants when applying to UCAS Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills are also required, as is a minimum of 10 days' work experience. In its entirety, the Progression Diploma is the equivalent of 2.5 A levels. Joe is studying the Progression Diploma in Creative and Media. His Extended Project has explored the use of photography in the media.

Further advice

If your student receives an offer from an institution which is unclear, please contact the University/Higher Education Institution directly to ask them to clarify what they expect your student to achieve to fulfil the offer.

Further context

Admission tutors will be made aware that it has been recommended that advisers should include a sentence such as the examples above, and therefore will expect to see something like this in applications from 14-19 Diploma students. Following this advice will allow admission tutors to clearly identify that the student is applying with a 14-19 Diploma, which will improve the institution's ability to make clear and appropriate offers to your students.

Contacts

If you have any queries about using the staff area of Apply please contact UCAS:

For general enquires:

- 0845 123 8001

For training on the Apply systems:

- 01242 545 712 cpd@ucas.ac.uk

To watch a presentation aimed at student about how to complete their UCAS form, please see: www.ucas.ac.uk/documents/ucasguides/diploma-howtoapply.ppsx

The Western Vocational Lifelong Learning Network aims to widen participation and facilitate the progression of vocational learners into higher education.