



The DofE as a 16-19 study programme pathway

Together we can transform young people's lives

What is a 16-19 study programme?

Funding for further education students, up to 18 years old, is provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Students are funded based on their hours of timetabled learning activity. For students aged 16-19, these hours may include both academic qualifications and non-qualification based study programmes.

Where a young person has a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP), study programmes are also an option for students aged up to 25.



Offering the DofE as a study programme pathway

The DofE is an eligible activity to incorporate into a 16-19 study programme as a non-qualification based activity, providing students with excellent opportunities to develop their soft skills and gain experiences to aid them in their future career.

Inclusion of DofE programmes as a study programme pathway has been approved by the Department for Education.

DofE activities can be counted as part of each students' planned learning hours and classed as non-qualification based fundable activity to count towards non-qualification hours (EEP). Including the DofE will increase the annual timetabled hour per student and the total per student fee school draws down to deliver their student offer.

Funding for the DofE as a study programme pathway

To receive maximum EFA funding, a full-time student must evidence a minimum of 540 learning hours. Funding is then reduced into part-time student bands based on reduced learning hours:

Student status	Hours required per year
Full time	540+
Band 4	450 – 539
Band 3	360 – 449
Band 2	280 – 359
Band 1	Up to 280



Min. learning hours required for DofE activities

Level	Direct not completed previous level	Indirect has completed previous level
Bronze	66	n/a
Silver	119	95
Gold	252	228

As per student funding is banded, the planned learning hours added by a DofE offer as part of a study programme pathway can ensure the college receives full-time funding for a student who may otherwise have a part-time academic timetable.

Whilst the level of individual funding fluctuates, the difference is significant and can enable the DofE to be fully funded for the participant. Colleagues in other schools have used this to fund timetabled activity for post-16 learning and used the allocation to staff time for support and administration, expeditions and participation fees.

Next steps

The EFA application is submitted in the autumn term.

If a college or sixth form wishes to adopt the DofE as a study programme pathway, it will need to be incorporated at EFA application stage for the year ahead.

DofE Regional and Country Offices are happy to provide advice and guidance for those licensed organisations wishing to adopt DofE as a pathway.



“ The DofE can have great impact as a study programme for students who may otherwise struggle to achieve on a fully academic timetable.”

Leyton Sixth Form College

Case study

Leyton Sixth Form College (LSC) in Waltham Forest currently offer the DofE as an option for students alongside A Levels.

The DofE was favoured for the non-qualification element of the study programme as it offers an adaptable structure to fit within difficult-to-balance timetables. This means that a DofE offer is fully funded and the college does not have to charge students to take part.

The DofE pathway has proved an extremely popular option over the last year. DofE was introduced as a pathway in 2015/16 and participation at the college has subsequently increased by over 60%. DofE is an ideal way to demonstrate how the college is improving their students' personal and social alongside employability.

The DofE can have great impact as a study programme for students who may otherwise struggle to achieve on a fully academic timetable. The recording of hours of activity and reporting of evidence on eDofE aligns easily with the study programme reporting mechanisms. The DofE has also been found to be a motivating achievement in itself and has a strong complementary impact on academic studies.



Further information

See DofE.org or email info@DofE.org for contact details

