

Illustration

**The year is 2010.
This could be the experience of
one Diploma student.**

Name Laura **Age** 16

Which Diploma did you do?

The Higher Diploma in IT.

Why?

I have always been fascinated by the power of technology and design. My ambition is to start up the next Apple, creating cool products that inspire and change people's lives.

What was the highlight of the course?

Organising a music event for my friends. I built a website to promote the event using the latest multimedia technologies, and I created my own technology system to control music and lighting on the day.

What are you doing now?

I am starting an Advanced Diploma in IT, with A level maths as my additional / specialist learning. I am thinking of studying economics at university, before I set up my own business as an IT entrepreneur and make my first million.

“In order to compete in the global economy, UK companies urgently need more young people to understand technology in business. The content of the Diploma will help develop students; both for university courses and rewarding, flexible careers.”

Andy Hill,
Head of Executive Resourcing & Development, Vodafone

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For more information about the Diploma in Information Technology, see www.direct.gov.uk/diplomas

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department for
children, schools and families

The Diploma

In Information Technology



Bringing
your
learning
to life



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► A brief introduction to the Information Technology (IT) Sector

Information Technology is key to our economy, society and to us as individuals. Almost every organisation – from multinationals to corner shops – depends on it. Without the bright, talented people who work in this sector, we couldn't download our favourite music, use mobile phones, or the internet.

Over a million people already work in IT (in the UK) and each year 150,000 new recruits are needed. The rate of growth means that there are always new opportunities in roles as varied as managing projects, designing new business solutions, developing websites or helping companies solve problems with their technology systems.

The Diploma provides an excellent foundation for a huge range of roles in every country in the world.

► What is the Diploma in Information Technology?

Young people studying the Diploma in Information Technology will learn how to come up with creative solutions, and to plan and deliver successful IT projects.

They'll learn why technology is so important to business and society – and how wide its applications are. They'll find out how to work in a team, how to communicate clearly with colleagues and customers. Problem-solving and self-management skills are also covered – useful whether the student finally decides on IT, or not.

Diploma in IT students also develop a good standard of English and maths. This broad mix of knowledge, understanding and skills will equip young people for college and university or employment.

There are three levels of Diploma. Starting in Year 10 or 12:

- » The Foundation Diploma takes broadly the same time to do as four or five GCSEs.
- » The Higher Diploma takes broadly the same time to do as five or six GCSEs.

Starting in Year 12 or above:

- » The Advanced Diploma takes broadly the same time to do as three A levels.

- » A Progression Diploma will also be available, which takes broadly the same time to do as two A levels. This will suit students who do not wish to complete a whole Advanced Diploma.

► What will the Diploma student learn?

Diploma in IT students will complete a series of compulsory and optional courses, all designed to give them valuable knowledge, skills and experience.

Compulsory courses

In line with the demands of the modern IT profession, the Diploma in IT focuses on three main themes: Business, People and Technology.

- » Business: how organisations work and the role technology can play.
- » People: how to work well with other people.
- » Technology: how to create technology solutions.

Students with a Foundation Diploma in IT will have a basic knowledge of technology as it is used in business, and related practical skills.

Students with a Higher Diploma in IT will develop deeper understanding and skills, exploring the potential of technology and developing systems to meet a business need.

An Advanced Diploma in IT provides an excellent grounding in technology, including how to analyse business problems and how to design and run technology systems that help organisations and individuals. There is a particular emphasis on learning how to communicate and operate professionally in a modern business environment.

Choices

Students also have the flexibility to choose from a wide range of additional or specialist learning options that are also part of the Diploma in IT.

Students can deepen their knowledge of their chosen Diploma subject, or can study a subject that broadens their study programme – perhaps a language or a science.

Student project

All Diploma students will complete a project to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have acquired. Students can choose their own project. This gives them the chance to build their confidence and show off their skills in the best light. It also helps to bring the subject to life and allows young people to express their creativity in a practical way.

Personal, learning and thinking skills

Mastering essential life and work skills is crucial in today's competitive job market. So all Diploma students are encouraged to develop skills like teamwork and self management, as part of their course. They will learn how to express themselves confidently, and how to apply their knowledge and skills creatively in a business environment.

Work Experience

All Diploma students will do a minimum of 10 days' work experience. They will also get the chance to learn, and be mentored by professionals working in their chosen field.

English, maths and ICT

All Diploma students need to achieve a minimum standard in English, maths and ICT. These subjects can be studied as part of the Diploma or can be taken as a GCSE alongside it.



► What will the Diploma lead to?

The Diploma is designed to broaden a young person's horizons and give them a wide range of options. It could lead on to university, training or to a job with further training. Someone who has a Diploma in IT doesn't have to take a degree in this subject or follow a career in this sector.

In fact, there is a huge range of career opportunities for someone with a solid grounding in IT. So whatever a young person wants to do next, they'll have the business and people skills needed.

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