



Competition based learning

Design for Diplomacy



Local skills competition



Competition	
Competition Name:	Design for Diplomacy: The Gift Challenge – an exciting new competition brought to you by WorldSkills UK in partnership with the Department for Education (DfE). This is your opportunity to shape the future of design, sustainability, and diplomacy by creating an iconic gift that represents the very best of England as a nation. To produce a gift that Government ministers and senior officials give to those they meet and work with as a demonstration of the high quality and creativity of young people’s skills in England. This competition can be embedded into the curriculum plan between September to March.
Competition Duration:	14 September 2026 – Competition briefing released to colleges/providers. 15 December 2026 – Submission deadline for all designs, including prototypes and supporting materials. 25 January 2027 – Judging by a distinguished panel, including the UK Department for Education Permanent Secretary. 12 February 2027 – Winner announced, prototype refined, and production approved and begins for 125+ items. 20 March 2027 – Deadline for completion of 125+ items, packaged and delivered.
Level:	Level 3 to Level 5 students and apprentices from FE colleges, Higher Education Institutes, and training providers in England.
Submission requirements	Two entries per organisation. Submissions should include a design board, narrative, prototype (physical or digital), cost breakdown, and sustainability statement. Each submission must include: • 150-word design narrative and sustainability statement • Cost and material breakdown, including packaging • A3 design concept board (PDF format)

	Digital rendered prototype or photographic image of a 3D model Submission Form
Skills / competencies to be demonstrated:	- Creativity and originality in design - Understanding and application of sustainable practices - Precision and craftsmanship in execution - Ability to develop a culturally neutral, diplomatic concept - Effective communication and presentation skills
Competition Task	
The Challenge: We're calling on talented students and apprentices from FE colleges, Higher Education Institutes, and training providers in England to design and create a small, beautiful, and light, eco/sustainable gift that reflects the essence of the nation's culture, innovation, and responsibility. This gift will take centre stage as a diplomatic government token at prestigious international events. Detailed individual tasks: Research key elements that represent the essence of English culture, innovation, and responsibility, ensuring the design is appropriate culturally neutral, non-political, and suitable for international contexts. Conceptualise and design a small, compact gift that embodies English creativity and craftsmanship, while being beautiful and practical for transportation and display. Select materials, responsibly sourced or recycled, to create a sustainable gift that aligns with global environmental priorities. Create a physical or digital prototype of the gift and it's packaging to demonstrate feasibility and functionality. Develop packaging design that complements the gift, reflecting elegance and sustainability. Prepare and deliver submission requirements by 15 December 2026, including a design board and narrative, prototype (physical or digital), cost breakdown, and sustainability statement.	
Marking / Assessment Criteria	
- Design quality and originality (25%) Technical - Representation of the UK (20%) Technical - Sustainability and materials used (20%) Technical - Cost feasibility and manufacturability (20%) Tactical - Presentation and storytelling (15%) Psychological	
Competition Rules	

This competition is open to Level 3 to Level 5 students and apprentices from FE colleges, Higher Education Institutes and training providers in England. Two entries per organisation.

Submissions should include a design board, narrative, prototype (physical or digital), cost breakdown, and sustainability statement.

Prizes and Recognition:

The chosen designed and manufactured gift will be distributed at some of the world's most prestigious educational and diplomatic events. Gain unparalleled recognition for your institution, your team, and your skills.

What We're Looking For:

Your design should:

- Be compact, durable, and easy to transport.
- Reflect English creativity, craftsmanship, and innovation.
- Be made from responsibly sourced or recycled materials.
- Be culturally neutral, non-political, and suitable for international contexts.
- Include a thoughtfully crafted packaging concept.
- Not display any logos.

Funding and Support:

WorldSkills UK will oversee competition management, communications, and coordination.

The winning design will receive £1250 funding to refine the prototype and produce the first batch of 125+ gifts by March 2027. **As a guide, each gift should cost no more than £10 to produce including packaging.**

In addition, allowable costs to selected project to work up revised prototype and plan production £500, allowance for postage/transport £250. **Total value £2,000.**

For more information, contact chyde@worldskillsuk.org or visit the [Design Diplomacy](#) page.

Resource Requirements

- Design tools (e.g., sketching materials, CAD software, workshop, studio or equivalent)
- Access to sustainable or recycled materials
- Prototyping tools (e.g., 3D printer, laser cutter, CNC machine, crafting tools, or equivalent)
- Research resources (e.g. primary or secondary sources, books, internet access, or cultural artefacts)
- Presentation equipment (e.g. descriptor of story and reasoning of design, presentation of physical or digital prototype)

Assessment and Marking Guide: Design for Diplomacy: The Gift Challenge

Competency	3 Marks	2 Marks	1 Mark	0 Marks	Quadrant / Code
Design quality and originality (25%)	Design is entirely unique and demonstrates advanced creativity, with features or concepts that have not been seen before in similar designs. The design idea is both functional and aesthetically striking.	Design demonstrates clear originality and creativity, incorporating features or ideas that improve or reimagine existing designs. The design is functional and visually appealing.	Design demonstrates limited originality, with small changes or adjustments made to existing ideas. While functional, the design does not stand out visually or conceptually.	Design is a direct replication or very close imitation of existing designs, with no evidence of creativity or originality. It lacks functionality or aesthetic appeal.	Technical (T1)
Representation of the England (20%)	Design incorporates multiple, clearly identifiable elements of English culture, innovation, and responsibility, with each element thoughtfully integrated into the overall design in a way that reflects national pride and diplomacy.	Design incorporates at least two elements of English culture, innovation, or responsibility, but these elements are not fully integrated into the overall design. Links to English identity are present but could be made stronger.	Design incorporates one element of English culture, innovation, or responsibility, but this element is underdeveloped or does not strongly connect to the overall design.	Design does not include any identifiable elements of English culture, innovation, or responsibility, and fails to represent England in a diplomatic context.	Technical (T2)

Competency	3 Marks	2 Marks	1 Mark	0 Marks	Quadrant / Code
Sustainability and materials used (20%)	Gift and packaging are made entirely from sustainably sourced or recycled materials, with clear evidence of sustainable production processes and minimal waste. Every material choice is justified.	Gift and packaging are mostly made from sustainably sourced or recycled materials, with some minor use of less sustainable materials. Waste is minimal, and most material choices are justified.	Gift and packaging use a combination of sustainable and non-sustainable materials, with several missed opportunities to use more eco-friendly options. Minimal effort has been made to reduce waste.	Gift and packaging do not use sustainably sourced or recycled materials, and there is no evidence of effort to consider sustainability in material choice or production processes.	Technical (T3)
Cost feasibility and manufacturability (20%)	Design is highly cost-effective, with clearly demonstrated evidence that it can be manufactured at scale using widely available materials and straightforward production methods.	Design is reasonably cost-effective, but some materials or production methods may pose challenges when scaling up. Adjustments would be needed to ensure cost efficiency at scale.	Design is not cost-effective, with some materials or production methods being too expensive or complex for scalable manufacturing. Significant adjustments would be required for production feasibility.	Design is impractical to manufacture at scale due to excessive costs, the use of rare materials, or overly complex production methods that cannot be simplified.	Tactical (TA1)

Competency	3 Marks	2 Marks	1 Mark	0 Marks	Quadrant / Code
Presentation and storytelling (15%)	Presentation is highly professional, engaging, and logically structured. It explains the design process in detail, justifies material choices, and clearly links the design to English culture and diplomatic use. Visual aids are used effectively.	Presentation is professional and logically structured, but some aspects of the design process, material choices, or cultural relevance are not fully explained. Visual aids are used but could be more impactful.	Presentation is basic, lacking detail about the design process, material choices, or cultural relevance. Visual aids are minimal or do not enhance understanding.	Presentation is incomplete, poorly structured, or fails to explain the design process, material choices, and cultural relevance. No effective use of visual aids.	Psychological (P1)

