
Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response

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Background information about Estyn

Estyn is the Office of His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. As a Crown body, we are independent of the Welsh Government.

Our principal aim is to raise the standards and quality education and training in Wales. This is primarily set out in the Learning and Skills Act 2000¹ and the Education Act 2005. In exercising its functions, we must give regard to the:

- Quality of education and training in Wales;
- Extent to which education and training meets the needs of learners;
- Educational standards achieved by those receiving education and training in Wales;
- Quality of leadership and management of those education and training providers, including whether the financial resources made available to those providing education and training are managed efficiently and used in a way which provides value for money;
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners; and,
- Contribution made to the well-being of learners.

Our remit includes (but is not exclusive to) nurseries and non-maintained settings, primary, secondary, special and all age schools, independent schools, pupil referrals units, further education, adult community learning, local government education services, work-based learning, and initial teacher training.

We may give advice to the Welsh Parliament on any matter connected to education and training in Wales. To achieve excellence for learners, we have set three strategic objectives:

- Provide accountability to service users on the quality and standards of education and training in Wales;
- Inform the development of national policy by the Welsh Government;
- Build capacity for improvement of the education and training system in Wales.

¹ This act to be replaced by the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022 when the quality provisions are commenced.

This response is not confidential.

Estyn's response

We scrutinise the work of Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the National Centre for Learning Welsh regularly. We have a specific inspection cycle for the National Centre for Learning Welsh and its Learn Welsh providers. We inspected the [National Centre for Learning Welsh](#) for the first time in 2021 and the second inspection will be conducted during the summer term this year. Our inspection of the Centre was mentioned extensively in the [Rapid review of the National Centre for Learning Welsh 2021](#) which, in turn, influenced the [Proposals for a Welsh Language Education Bill](#).

We see evidence of the work of Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol during inspections and engagement work with the further education and apprenticeship sectors. During the 2024-25 academic year, we will also be conducting a thematic inspection to review Welsh-medium and bilingual training plans for the further education and apprenticeships sector. The review will evaluate the effectiveness of the various plans to develop the language and pedagogical skills of staff in these sector; from those who are fluent and confident in their Welsh language skills to those who are starting their journey of beginning to speak and use the Welsh language.

Both bodies have a key role in ensuring that appropriate training is available in the post-16 sectors and supporting the achievement of the strategic aims of Cymraeg 2050.

It should be noted that we recommended in our inspection report of the National Centre that it should '*Share the methodology for successful teaching and second language acquisition with other relevant sectors to support the Welsh Government's aim of achieving a million active Welsh speakers by 2050*'. During an inspection of a Learn Welsh provider, evidence was seen of the increasing influence and importance of the Welsh for Adults sector. This was noted in the following case study: [Increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the education workforce](#).

In the same report, on page 5, we state '*On the whole, learners (in the Welsh for Adults sector) acquire the Welsh language more quickly and effectively than pupils at the corresponding levels in English-medium secondary schools*.' The WfA sector has an extremely important role in influencing our education system across the age range to produce active Welsh speakers. The following case studies show how the ethos and operation of the sector is successful:

[Turning learners into users of the Welsh language](#).

[Formal and informal learning approaches that enable learners to assimilate into the Welsh-speaking community](#)

We believe that careful consideration needs to be given to the side effect of any reduction in the linguistic interventions and the development work of Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the National Centre for Learning Welsh on the Welsh language and opportunities for young people to acquire and use it. Although we have not yet inspected the Centre this year, we understand that considerable initial work has been done to influence and expand effective practice in other sectors.

We are concerned that a reduction in current funding levels could undermine the recent increase in the breadth of influence of the National Centre for Learning Welsh. Without at least maintaining the current funding levels, we are concerned that the number of active Welsh speakers will not increase on a meaningful scale.