
Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response

Enw / Name:	Owen Evans
Rôl / Role:	His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales
E-bost / Email:	ChiefInspector@estyn.gov.uk
Rhif Ffôn / Tel No:	029 2044 6446
Dyddiad / Date:	12.09.25
Pwnc / Subject:	Consultation on the design requirements for new AS and A levels in Cymraeg and Core Cymraeg

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.

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

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.

This response is not confidential.

Guidance for completing the consultation (if you have any questions please contact the AD responsible)

Response

Introduction

- The new structure seeks to reduce the number of units from 6 to 5, differentiating more clearly between the weighting of the AS and A level in Cymraeg and Core Cymraeg. Forty per cent (40%) of the qualification would be completed in Year 12 and 60% in Year 13, reflecting the existing structure. Also, the reduction to 5 units would align with other AS qualifications.
- There is a clear effort to build on the strengths of the existing AS and A level qualifications. Pupils' enthusiasm and satisfaction are core to realising the aim of a million Welsh speakers by 2050. The qualification seems suitable to enable pupils to communicate effectively in meaningful situations and contexts.
- The new qualifications support learners to move gradually along the Welsh language skills continuum.
- Unit 2 (Cymraeg) is an external examination which enables pupils to explore the Welsh language, past and present, with a focus on historical, political, social and cultural aspects. Although it offers flexibility and personal options, it will also foster awareness of the status of the language and encourage pride in Welsh heritage.
- Although there are fewer set texts, there is a wide selection of texts to study. However, it must be ensured that the content is substantial enough in terms of challenge and the volume of work, particularly for learning AS Cymraeg in Year 12.
- The qualifications provide practical opportunities to use the language correctly in a variety of registers. However, consideration should be given to the suitability of the nature of these tasks and the level of challenge – for example, writing the minutes of meetings in Unit 2 Cymraeg – ensuring that elements that are similar to the world of work do not take priority over pupils' interests and satisfaction.
- The synoptic element will remain in Unit 4 (Cymraeg), during the group discussion, allowing pupils to focus on areas of personal interest.

- A variety of assessment methods are provided which offer an effective balance between oral and written skills, combining external examinations and non-examination assessments.
- There is an emphasis on the oral element in the assessment for Core Cymraeg. This aligns with the weighting of the new GCSE and places more importance on developing communication skills, making the qualification more accessible to a wider range of pupils. However, with the emphasis on the oral element, an increase to 50% rather than 45% would be more appropriate.
- We agree that the AS and A level Core Cymraeg should include opportunities to study an appropriate variety of literary and non-literary texts from different periods. However, perhaps it would be possible to be flexible here – by offering the choice of a drama, film, short stories or even a short novel to ensure that the subject engages interest.
- It is crucial that the oral examinations are conducted by external examiners as it raises the status of the subject and gives pupils an opportunity to communicate with an unfamiliar person. This ensures consistent standards and provides valuable experiences for learners.
- We agree that the current method of assessing grammar does not respond to the needs of learners in the Cymraeg qualification. Although linguistic accuracy is important, a new assessment method is needed that allows pupils to demonstrate their linguistic skills more meaningfully.
- The assessment objectives compare positively with qualifications in other subjects.

Consultation questions

Q1: Would you like to respond to the questions in Part 1: Design proposals for AS and A levels in Cymraeg

Yes

Part A: Design proposals for a new AS and A level in Cymraeg

(for learners who have been educated in Category 2 and 3 schools)

Qualification structure

Proposal 1: The AS and A level Cymraeg qualification structure should be revised to include a reduction in the number of units from 6 to 5. The qualification should be comprised of 2 AS units and 3 A2 units.

We propose a reduction in the number of units from 6 units in the current qualification structure to 5 units in the new qualification structure. This would mean reducing the number of AS units to 2, whilst maintaining 3 units at A2.

In proposing this change, we are of the view that it better reflects the required weightings of the AS and A2 qualifications, with AS units contributing 40% of a full A level and A2 units contributing 60%. It also aligns with the approach used in similar approved language qualifications, including AS and A levels in English Language, English Literature, English Language and Literature, French, German and Spanish.

Stakeholders told us this change could improve manageability for centres and learners and better reflect the teaching and learning time in the first year of study. For example, in relation to the current AS qualification, teachers noted they only have two terms to deliver content and develop learners' skills, as oracy exams can start as early as March, with non-examination assessment submission and external exams in May. The change could also help to address perceptions among current and prospective learners of a higher volume of content and assessment in this subject in than other subjects they may choose to take.

Despite the reduction in units, the proposed qualification structure still allows a broad range of assessment methods across the qualification, including opportunities to assess oracy in AS and A2 units, the assessment of written communication through external examination and non-exam assessment. Stakeholders told us that the breadth of assessment methods in the current qualification is appealing to learners and supports valid, authentic and engaging language assessments.

Q2: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q3: Please explain your answer below.

We support the fact that the structure is changing and that there is an attempt to reduce the number of units from 6 to 5 to differentiate between the weighting in the AS and A level qualification. This means that 40% of the qualification is in Year 12 and 60% in Year 13, which follows the current qualification. We also recognise that reducing the number of units from 6 to 5 would also better align with other subjects.

However, the descriptions of the requirements in the Year 12 AS units question whether there is sufficient volume, challenge and texts to fill the learning sessions – particularly in unit 2 in the assessment 'Cymraeg in context', where pupils are required to write in forms such as a news bulletin, a speech, a report etc. Lessons based on such forms may be repetitive and short which, consequently, means that pupils lose interest and drop the subject at the end of Year 12. The fact that poetry has disappeared completely from the Year 12 AS examination means that there is not as much meat on the bone in

terms of volume of work and challenge. We therefore suggest that it needs to be ensured that the content is sufficient. It would also be beneficial for the regulator to provide clear examples of the possible tasks for Unit 2 to ensure that the range of forms is varied enough to maintain motivation and provide sufficient challenge for all learners.

Purpose and aims

Proposal 2: The AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications should encourage learners to develop their interest and enjoyment of Cymraeg as they:

- communicate effectively, correctly, clearly and confidently, both orally and in writing in a range of situations and registers
- understand the significance of purpose, audience and context when communicating, expressing, analysing, interpreting, understanding and responding to language
- write creatively and factually for a range of purposes, in a structured way
- analyse literary and non-literary texts, and familiar and unfamiliar texts, independently
- listen and respond to the opinions of others when expressing a point of view, contributing spontaneously
- express an independent opinion, based on knowledge and understanding of a range of literary and non-literary texts
- make appropriate connections between various aspects of the subject

The qualification should be designed to:

- promote a varied, positive, relevant and contemporary experience of Cymraeg and Welsh cultures, backgrounds and communities
- enable learners to gain an understanding of the development and status of the Welsh language through engagement with a range of texts, and to understand the broader contexts impacting the Welsh language including historical, social, political, institutional and cultural contexts, at a local and national level
- provide a suitable foundation to allow learners to continue to study and use the language effectively, confidently and naturally in a range of contexts in a bilingual society

The proposed purposes and aims build on the strengths of the current AS and A level Welsh (First Language) qualification, as identified by stakeholders. These include enabling learners to communicate in a range of situations and contexts and for a variety of purposes, listen and respond to others, and analyse familiar and unfamiliar texts independently.

They also support learners' progression by enabling them to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at 14-16 through the new GCSE Cymraeg Language and Literature qualification. This includes engaging with a range of literary and non-literary texts within a range of contexts, and considering the significance of purpose, audience and context when communicating.

There are also some important changes and additions on the basis of stakeholder feedback. For example, despite recognising the need for learners to communicate 'correctly', stakeholders expressed concerns that an overemphasis on correctness can detract from an awareness of how language can be adapted to be used effectively, naturally and appropriately in different registers and contexts. Stakeholders were also keen to ensure that the qualification helps learners to develop their knowledge of Cymraeg in real-life situations and to see the relevance of continued development of Cymraeg skills for contributing to a bilingual society.

Q4: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q5: Please explain your answer below.

We support the attempt to build on and strengthen the current AS and A level qualifications. Pupils' enthusiasm and satisfaction in the Welsh language is crucial and necessary in order to reach the aim of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The qualification appears to meet the demand for pupils to be able to communicate in a number of purposeful situations and contexts. We would also like to see more clarity regarding the role of translanguaging in the new qualification, ensuring that the assessment focuses on using the skill in authentic contexts without undermining the learning experience through the medium of Welsh.

Learning contexts

Proposal 3: The AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications should enable learners to develop their knowledge and skills for life, learning and work, now and in the future.

Learners should be given the opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of contexts including:

- literary and non-literary contexts
- practical and creative contexts
- contexts which allow learners to consider connections between different aspects of the subject

The contexts should enable learners to develop and demonstrate understanding of:

- the structures, grammar and patterns of spoken and written language in a variety of relevant contexts
- content, form and style, including tone and appropriateness of language in a range of literary and non-literary texts
- the cultures and traditions of Wales

the status and use of the Welsh language in a bilingual country, historically and today, including in the community, society and the workplace

This proposal reflects feedback from stakeholders about the need to embed a broad range of meaningful learning contexts to enable learners to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. These contexts should support engaging and authentic teaching and learning, and valid language assessment. Stakeholders also wanted the learning contexts to develop learners' understanding and enjoyment of the Welsh language and culture, as well as an appreciation of their own Welshness.

The proposed learning contexts build on the new approach to integration within the new GCSE Welsh Language and Literature qualification. They also reflect stakeholder feedback about the positive experiences provided for learners studying AS and A level Welsh Second

Language, and the inclusion of contexts focusing on the status and importance of Cymraeg in a range of real-life situations. This is an aspect that representatives from universities told us would be beneficial to all learners progressing to higher education.

Q6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q7: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that the new qualifications support learners to make progress along the Welsh language skills continuum.

Unit 2, which is an external examination, provides pupils with an opportunity to explore the Welsh language, past and present, with a focus on historical, political, social and cultural factors under the heading 'Cymraeg, past and present'. While this offers more flexibility and choice within the qualification and includes opportunities for learners to choose personal focuses and interests, we hope this will give pupils satisfaction when studying their legacy and heritage.

Therefore, we appreciate that there is an attempt here to promote awareness by giving more status to the language.

Consideration should also be given to including a wider range of creative materials, such as short stories, short films or contemporary dramas to ensure that the subject remains relevant and appealing to a wide range of learners.

Content

Proposal 4: The AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications should require learners to demonstrate the following knowledge, understanding and skills in both oral and written language:

- demonstrate accuracy and effectiveness in using the syntax and grammar of the language in a variety of forms and contexts and for a range of audiences and purposes
- use language in the appropriate register in a wide range of contexts for creative purposes, to discuss literary, non-literary, visual and auditory texts, for a variety of practical purposes, including translanguaging and editing, and taking into account the purpose and the audience
- discuss, consider, question and respond spontaneously and in a deliberate and confident manner, to the views and opinions of others in order to reach informed conclusions
- critically analyse and convey a personal response to a variety of texts, including familiar and unfamiliar texts, using suitable linguistic terminology
- select relevant extracts from texts in order to explain and exemplify personal views and opinions
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of poetry and prose from a range of different periods and places
- draw information from a range of relevant texts to understand, comment on and evaluate sources of information, and summarise and draw conclusions

The proposed content builds on the strengths of the current AS and A level Welsh (First Language), as identified by stakeholders and subject experts. It also supports learners' progression by building on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at 14-16 through the new GCSE Cymraeg Language and Literature.

To align with the qualification purposes and aims, there is a move towards balancing 'correctness' when applying communication skills with effective, spontaneous and confident use of language.

The proposed content aims to enable learners to develop and demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to a broad range of texts, including visual and auditory. It was felt that this would be appealing to learners, allowing them to engage independently with a variety of materials of personal interest, including digital texts and sources of information.

Following feedback from a range of stakeholders, there is a strengthened focus on developing and demonstrating knowledge and understanding of grammar and language skills in practical contexts. For example, many stakeholders emphasised the importance of practical language skills such as editing for supporting learners' progression to further study and work.

We also propose including translanguageing as an essential skill for learners living, studying or working in a bilingual environment. It is important to note that some stakeholders expressed concerns that it could detract from the unique teaching and learning experience within the Cymraeg classroom and noted that learners educated through the medium of Welsh are able to develop these skills across their study of a range of other subjects. In contrast, other stakeholders told us that including translanguageing within the study of Cymraeg as an academic subject can provide a valid and relevant context for developing linguistic and technical knowledge of the language. Having reflected on the different views expressed to us, we propose that these skills are assessed through non-exam assessment tasks to ensure that learners can apply their skills in authentic, real-life contexts.

We have moved away from what was considered overly engineered or artificial tasks, requiring learners to make direct comparisons between extracts or texts. Instead, we have retained a focus on learners drawing information from a range of texts to understand, comment on and evaluate information. This reflects stakeholder feedback about the perceived strengths of synoptic assessment for encouraging learners to engage independently with a broad range of Cymraeg.

Q8: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q9: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that there is a range of texts to study in the new qualifications, despite the reduction in set texts. However, it is important that the content is sufficient, provides an appropriate challenge and that there is sufficient volume for teaching, particularly for the Year 12 AS course.

We appreciate the opportunity for pupils to be able to make practical use of the language and gain an accurate understanding of the language in different situations and registers to prepare them for their future destinations. However, the suitability of the nature of these opportunities and the level of challenge must be considered, for example writing minutes of meetings as a form in Unit 2. We would also like to see more clarity in terms of the balance between practical and creative tasks to avoid a situation where elements that reflect the world of work are prioritised over developing pupils' confidence and enjoyment of the Welsh language. It must be ensured that trying to introduce forms that would be suitable for the world of work, for example, is not prioritised at the expense of pupils' satisfaction and interest.

We welcome the fact that the synoptic element remains in unit 4 during the group discussion to ensure that pupils can base the work on personal interests.

Content

Proposal 5: There should be a reduction in the number of set texts that learners are required to study across the AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications to support manageability and engagement.

We propose a reduction in the number of set texts that learners are required to study at AS and A level. This reflects the concerns we have heard about the volume of content in the current qualification and the negative impact that this has on developing the skills needed for assessments given the limited teaching and learning time.

Stakeholders told us that there was repetition within and across units in the current AS and A level Welsh (First Language) qualification in terms of the type of content that learners were required to study. This can impact engagement and lead to duplication in assessment. This is particularly the case with oracy assessments, which can result in the examination extending beyond the recommended duration in order to ensure that each learner within the group can demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the breadth of content.

The proposal also reflects the view shared with us that there needs to be a broader range of contexts within the qualification, including literary and non-literary, practical and creative, to ensure that the qualification appeals to a broad range of learners and reflects the breadth of language knowledge and skills which users of qualifications, including higher education and employers, tell us learners need to support further progression.

Despite recognising the potential benefits of a reduction in set texts, some stakeholders were clear about the need to balance considerations of manageability with the need to include sufficient content in both AS and A2 units. This is essential to support effective and engaging teaching and learning, and to protect the perceived value and status of the qualification for supporting further progression, particularly to higher education.

Q10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Neither agree nor disagree

Q11: Please explain your answer below.

We support the proposal that there should be a reduction in the number of set texts. However, there is a need to ensure that the content is sufficient for AS and A level. The most important thing in ensuring how engaging the texts are to ensure that they are appealing and engage interest.

Consideration must also be given to the duration of the oral examination, which is earmarked to be an hour and a quarter. We feel it is perhaps too long a period for pupils to be able to discuss (naturally) for such a long time. It would be useful for the regulator to reconsider the duration of the oral examination and consider more flexible models that ensure a natural experience and less stress for learners.

Content

Proposal 6: The AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications should include opportunities to engage with an appropriate range of literary and non-literary texts from different periods (classical, traditional and contemporary) including:

- drama
- a prose text
- a range of poetry
- non-literary texts in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes

We propose removing the requirement for learners to study a film. Whilst stakeholders were clear that this can be an engaging element of the current qualification, they reported that studying both a film and a drama for the current Unit 1 oracy examination can lead to duplication in content and assessment of skills. Rather, they emphasised the benefits for learners of being able to engage with one set text in depth, suggesting that this can be a more manageable, engaging and valid means of assessing literary knowledge and communication skills.

Some stakeholders felt strongly about the need for learners to continue to study a drama as a mandatory text within the new qualification. This is because it is no longer a requirement of the new GCSE Cymraeg Language and Literature qualification, meaning that learners could otherwise progress to higher education without having this experience. They also believed it could motivate learners to engage with Cymraeg outside of the classroom through attending live performances and experiencing Welsh theatre and culture.

Although there would no longer be a formal requirement for the qualification to include a film, we are clear that the qualification should be designed to enable learners to engage with a range of materials, including visual texts and sources of information. This reflects the view of stakeholders that the qualification should include a greater degree of flexibility and choice for learners to engage with themes and issues of personal interest. It also potentially broadens the types of texts that learners can encounter, to better support engagement, and to increase awareness of how Welsh media, arts and culture contribute to contemporary society.

While stakeholders largely agree on the importance of including contemporary texts which reflect the diverse experiences and identities of learners throughout Wales, it was also noted that this needs to be balanced with an appropriate focus on more traditional content, including literary texts from a range of periods. This will help to ensure that the qualification continues to provide a solid foundation for progression to further study and maintains its value and status as an academic subject.

Some stakeholders expressed concerns about the current emphasis on poetry within the qualification, noting that including poetry within AS and A2 units can impact how appealing the qualification is for some learners. However, other stakeholders suggested that it is how poetry is currently assessed which impacts learner experience and engagement. In particular, teachers and learners expressed concerns about the over-dependence on the recall of knowledge, including the requirement to learn quotations. We propose that tasks assessing knowledge and understanding of poetry should be open book. This reflects what teachers tell us is a positive change in the new GCSE Cymraeg Language and Literature qualification and the view that this better supports manageability, engagement and validity.

Q12: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Strongly agree

Q13: Please explain your answer below

The AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications should include opportunities to study an appropriate range of literary and non-literary texts from different periods (classical, traditional and contemporary).

We appreciate focusing on one text rather than two in unit 1. Although we feel that the range of experiences is beneficial for pupils, particularly those who want to study further in the field after school, we therefore feel that studying a drama is a good experience as it is no longer compulsory in the new GSCE course from September 2026. We agree that studying a drama also encourages pupils to attend theatre performances and opens doors and engages interest in wider culture.

We feel that there is a need to move with the times for the subject to be appealing to pupils, but studying prose from the Middle Ages and the Hengerdd is just as important – again to prepare for courses outside school and ensure that the A level Cymraeg qualification is seen as an academic subject that can connect with other classical subjects. We feel that a balance between old and new is crucial. Ensuring additional flexibility in the choice of texts, for example, including opportunities to study short stories or contemporary items – would also support teachers to provide a more personal and appealing curriculum for their learners.

We agree that an 'open book' assessment should be based on poetry to ensure that it is not a memory test of knowledge and quotes. It is also a progression of the new GCSE.

Assessment structure

Proposal 7: There should be a broad range of assessment methods across the new AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications, including:

- oral examination
- external written examination
- non-examination assessment

Stakeholders, including teachers and learners, strongly value the broad range of assessment methods in the current qualification as it allows learners' knowledge, understanding and skills to be applied and assessed in a range of valid, authentic and engaging contexts. Learners appreciate the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in ways other than through external examinations, something that is not always offered across the range of AS and A level subjects that they study. We propose that a broad range of assessment methods continues to feature in the new qualification to reflect this positive feedback, and to support manageability and engagement for learners and their teachers.

This proposal also reflects the changes in the range of national Cymraeg qualifications at 14-16. Retaining an appropriate amount of non-examination assessment ensures an element of flexibility for centres to continue to adapt teaching and learning to the needs of their learners, again supporting manageability, engagement and inclusivity.

Q14: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q15: Please explain your answer below.

We agree with the various ways of assessing pupils, which is an effective balance between oral and written and a combination of external examinations and non-examination assessments.

Assessment structure

Proposal 8: In the AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications, there should be opportunities for learners to be assessed in their oracy skills in both AS and A2 units. The oracy assessments should include opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts, including literary and non-literary. The total assessment of oracy (across AS and A level) should contribute 40% of the marks to the overall qualification.

We propose retaining oral examinations as a mandatory requirement in both AS and A2 units in order to reflect the importance placed on oracy skills in this subject. Teachers recognise the importance that learners place on developing their oral communication skills and were clear that this aspect can help to make the qualification more appealing to a broader range of learners.

Stakeholders recognise the value of providing opportunities for learners to develop and demonstrate their oracy skills within literary contexts, and the importance of this for reflecting Welsh literary heritage. However, learners also stated they would welcome the opportunity to apply and adapt these skills to a broader range of contexts recognising how this can support progression to further study and work.

The proposal to increase the weighting of assessments focusing on oracy from 35% of the overall current qualification to 40% of the overall new qualification reflects the importance placed on oral communication skills and broader strategic aims for the Welsh language. It

also aligns with the decision to increase the weighting of oral assessments in the new GCSE Cymraeg Language and Literature.

Q16: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q17 : Please explain your answer below.

We welcome the need for the oral element to be 40%. It aligns with the weighting of the new GCSE examinations and reflects the importance of pupils developing their communication skills, while making the qualification more accessible to a wider audience of pupils. To ensure consistency, it would be beneficial to provide external examiners with standardised training and ensure that the same expectations are applied across centres.

Assessment structure

Proposal 9: The AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications' oracy examinations should be assessed by an external examiner.

Stakeholders were clear that learners enjoy the experience of being assessed by an external examiner as it provides them with an authentic experience of using Cymraeg in unfamiliar situations outside of the classroom environment. It also adds a sense of status and occasion and differentiates assessment at AS and A level from prior qualification experience.

The proposal to require that learners are assessed by an external examiner can support consistency in marking and comparability in experience across cohorts and between centres. This supports perceptions of rigour, reliability and validity, as well as manageability for centres.

As part of the engagement, we asked stakeholders to consider any potential benefits of conducting oral assessments via alternative means, such as digital conferencing. Many teachers and learners felt strongly that this could impact the reliability, manageability and engagement of these important assessments.

Q18: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Strongly agree

Q19: Please explain your answer below.

We agree strongly that the oral examinations should be conducted by external examiners. By doing so, it gives the subject status and gives pupils responsibility and an opportunity to communicate with a person they do not already know. We believe that pupils benefit greatly from opportunities such as this and that it is very important to retain face-to-face examinations. The use of external examiners also ensures consistency in standards and equitable opportunities for all pupils.

Assessment structure

Proposal 10: The new AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications should include an assessment via external written examination in both AS and A2 units.

We propose that the new AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications continue to include assessment via external written examination in both AS and A2 units. Stakeholders, including teachers, were of the view that this can help to support perceptions of reliability, rigour and robustness, as well as support manageability.

Despite this, stakeholders felt strongly that two external written examinations at the end of the A level course presented manageability challenges for learners, causing assessment burden. We propose that the A2 units including assessment via external written examination is reduced to one.

Q20: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q21: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that the new AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications should continue to include external written examinations across the AS and A levels units and that reducing the A2 units from two to one would reduce the burden on learners and the assessment burden. We would also like to ensure that the content of the qualification continues to provide the skills and knowledge needed to access higher education successfully and that it aligns with the expectations of universities in Wales and beyond.

Assessment structure

Proposal 11: In the AS and A level Cymraeg qualifications, learners should be given the opportunity to demonstrate grammatical knowledge and understanding through assessments focusing on the practical application of skills which are relevant for future study and work.

Stakeholders recognise the importance that needs to be placed on developing learners' knowledge and understanding of grammar and language. However, they have expressed strong views on the approach to assessing this within the current qualification, which they believe is too theoretical and which does not provide learners with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge in relevant and meaningful ways. Additionally, teachers expressed concerns about the current approach to assessing grammar alongside poetry,

given the volume of content being assessed within a 2-hour written examination, and the challenges faced by learners in preparing for the assessment.

We propose that assessments focusing on grammatical knowledge and understanding should enable learners to apply their skills in more practical contexts which are relevant for future study and work, supporting manageability for learners. We also propose that grammatical knowledge and understanding is assessed holistically throughout the range of assessments focusing on effective written and spoken communication.

Q22: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q23: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that the current approach to assessing grammar does not meet learners' needs. We feel that although linguistic accuracy is important, there is a need to change the way in which it is assessed as it does not actually enable pupils to demonstrate their linguistic ability. We recognise the challenges faced by learners when preparing for this assessment. We also recommend that teachers should be provided with clear guidelines on how to integrate the assessment of grammatical skills with the development of natural communication, so that the assessments are more relevant and meaningful to real life.

We agree with the proposal that grammatical knowledge and understanding should be assessed holistically through a range of assessments focusing on effective written and oral communication.

Assessment structure

Proposal 12: The assessment objectives (AOs) within the qualification should include coverage of a range of sub-strands which include (but are not limited to):

- AO1: Understanding and response (50%)
- Respond critically and coherently to a range of spoken, written and visual texts by selecting and interpreting relevant material.
- Collate, comment on and evaluate sources of information, make cross-references and summarise and reach meaningful conclusions.
- Demonstrate knowledge of specific texts/topics and the significance of their social, historical and cultural background, using critical analysis and evaluation of other interpretations.
- Listen and respond to others and consider their contributions and points of view.

AO2: Communication and expression (50%)

- Communicate correctly, clearly and in a structured way, demonstrating a range of linguistic features.
- Use knowledge of grammar effectively within various contexts.
- Communicate using various linguistic registers and make effective use of Welsh in a range of situations and contexts and for different purposes and audiences.
- Develop relevant viewpoints and ideas, summarise and reach conclusions.

The proposed assessment objectives reflect input from subject and assessment experts to ensure alignment with the qualification's purposes, aims and content and to ensure comparability with the knowledge, understanding and skills required in a range of other language AS and A levels.

They also build on the prior learning at 14-16 through Curriculum for Wales, as well as supporting alignment to the Common Reference Levels which will be defined within Welsh Government's Code for describing Welsh language ability (see section 3).

Q24: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q25: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that the assessment objectives compare favourably with qualifications in other subjects.

Assessment structure

Proposal 13: Qualification outline

The table below gives the outline of the current AS and A level Welsh (First Language) qualifications

Current	Unit	Weighting
AS	Unit 1: speaking exam	15%
	Part 1 – drama	
	Part 2 – Film	
	Unit 2: Non-examination assessment	10%
	Unit 3	15%
	Written exam	
A2	Unit 4	25%
	Speaking exam	
	Unit 5	15%

Written exam	
Unit 6	20%
Written exam	
<p>The AS and A level Cymraeg qualification outline below is for illustrative purposes only. We invite respondents to give feedback on any aspects. You may wish to consider; qualification structure, unit content, range of assessment methods, range of texts and elements impacting effective assessment including manageability, engagement, reliability and validity.</p>	

New	Unit	Weighting	Description
AS	Unit 1: Speaking exam	20%	Speaking exam: Drama <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pair/group task – drama (set text) expressing an opinion – discussion centred on a choice of themes linked to the set text (opportunity to explore additional literary and non-literary texts linked to theme, which have either supported teaching and learning or which evidence independent engagement– e.g. classical tales; a drama experienced live or in script; additional texts by the same playwright; contemporary documentaries focusing on connected themes)
	Unit 2: Written exam	20%	Written Exam: integrated unit focused on overarching theme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore a range of contexts impacting the development and status of the Welsh language, cultures and identities connected to an overarching theme (incl. engagement with extracts from literary and non-literary texts which enable learners to select areas of personal interest, including literary, historical, social, political and cultural factors)
A2	Unit 3: Speaking exam	20%	Speaking Exam: Novel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pair/group discussion – novel and synoptic element
	Unit 4: Non examination assessment	20%	Non examination assessment: The development of language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> researching and expressing an opinion on a theme of current relevance creative writing
	Unit 5: Written exam	20%	Written exam: Poetry and language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> poetry across the ages (including classical and contemporary – open book) language skills – grammatical knowledge & understanding through practical tasks

Q26. To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q27: Please explain your answer below.

We agree with the suggestions within the grid. The fact that the non-examination assessments have moved to Year 13 mean that pupils will have developed their skills purposefully by then. We therefore understand that unit 3 and the poetry element in unit 5 will be the school's choice. We welcome this in terms of flexibility, but ensuring consistency with texts across the board will be challenging but necessary. It would also be beneficial to ensure that assessment methods and learning objectives align clearly with the new GCSE to avoid gaps in skills and to ensure a smooth progression for learners when progressing to AS and A level.

We welcome the fact that the weighting of the oral exam has changed. It is 50% of the AS but 33.3% of the A2.

Q28: Would you like to respond to the questions in Part B: Design proposals for a new AS and A level in Core Cymraeg?

Yes

Part B: Design proposals for a new AS and A level in Core Cymraeg

(for learners in Category 1 schools and settings)

Qualification structure

Proposal 1: The AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualification structure should be revised to include a reduction in the number of units from 6 to 5. The qualification should be comprised of 2 AS units and 3 A2 units.

We propose a reduction in the number of units from 6 units in the current qualification structure to 5 units in the new qualification structure. This would mean reducing the number of AS units to 2, whilst maintaining 3 units at A2.

In proposing this change, we are of the view that it better reflects the required weightings of the AS and A2 qualifications, with AS units contributing 40% of a full A level and A2 units contributing 60%. It also aligns with the approach used in similar approved language qualifications, including AS and A levels in English Language, English Literature, English Language and Literature, French, German and Spanish.

Stakeholders told us that this change could improve manageability for centres and learners and better reflect the teaching and learning time in the first year of study. For example, in relation to the current AS qualification, teachers noted they only have two terms to deliver content and develop learners' skills, as oracy exams can start as early as March, with non-examination assessment submission and external exams in May. The change could also help to address perceptions amongst current and prospective learners of a higher volume of content and assessment in this subject than other subjects they may choose to take.

Despite the reduction in units, the proposed qualification structure still allows a broad range of assessment methods across the qualification, including opportunities to assess oracy at AS and A2, and assessment of written communication through external examination and non-exam assessment. Stakeholders told us that the breadth of assessment methods in the current qualification is appealing to learners and supports valid, authentic and engaging language assessment.

Q29: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q30

We support the fact that the structure is changing and that there is an attempt to reduce the number of units from 6 to 5 to differentiate between the weighting in the AS and A2 qualification. This means that 40% of the qualification is in Year 12 and 60% in Year 13, which follows the current qualification. We also recognise that reducing the number of units from 6 to 5 would also better align with other subjects.

Purpose and aims

Proposal 2: The AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications should encourage learners to develop their interest and enjoyment of Cymraeg as they:

- communicate effectively, clearly and confidently both orally and in writing in a range of situations and registers
- understand the significance of purpose, audience and context when communicating, expressing, analysing, interpreting, understanding and responding to language
- write creatively and factually for a range of purposes
- analyse literary and non-literary texts, and familiar and unfamiliar texts, independently
- listen and respond to the opinions of others through social interaction contributing spontaneously and confidently
- express an independent opinion, based on knowledge and understanding of a range of literary and non-literary texts
- make connections between various aspects of the subject and between texts

The qualification should be designed to:

- promote a varied, positive, relevant and contemporary experience of Cymraeg and Welsh cultures, backgrounds and communities
- enable learners to gain an understanding of the development and status of the Welsh language and to understand the broader contexts impacting the Welsh language including social, political, institutional and cultural contexts, and at a local and national level

- support learners to confidently speak and use Cymraeg in a range of contexts alongside their study as well as providing a suitable foundation for future progression of Cymraeg skills in life, further study and work
- encourage learners to see the significance of their contribution to a successful bilingual society

The proposed purposes and aims build on the strengths of the current GCE AS and A level Welsh Second Language as identified by stakeholders. These include enabling learners to communicate within a wide range of situations and contexts, listen and respond to the opinions of others and analyse familiar and unfamiliar texts independently.

They also support learners' progression by enabling them to build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at 14-16 through the new GCSE Core Cymraeg qualification. This includes further developing their ability to contribute spontaneously and confidently to conversations and discussions and express themselves in a range of contexts and for different audiences and purposes.

There are also some important changes and additions on the basis of stakeholder feedback. For example, stakeholders expressed concerns that an overemphasis on correctness can be demoralising for learners, as well as detracting from an awareness of how language can be adapted to be used effectively, and appropriately in different registers and contexts.

The qualification intends to support learners to develop the confidence to use their Cymraeg in all aspects of life, in and outside of the classroom, as well as preparing them to live, learn and work confidently through the medium of Welsh in the future.

Q31: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Strongly agree

Q32: Please explain your answer below.

We agree strongly that the AS and A level Core Cymraeg should encourage learners to develop their interest and enjoyment of the Welsh language in line with the stated objectives.

We are completely convinced in terms of supporting the aim of the qualification, which is to support learners to develop the confidence to use their Welsh language in all aspects of life, both inside and outside the classroom, in addition to preparing them to live, learn and work confidently through the medium of Welsh in the future. This is crucial if we are to reach the target of a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Learning contexts

Proposal 3: The AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications should enable learners to develop their knowledge and skills for life, learning and work, now and in the future.

Learners should be given the opportunity to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in a range of contexts including:

- literary and non-literary contexts

- practical and creative contexts
- contexts which allow learners to consider connections between different aspects of the subject

The contexts should encourage understanding of:

- the structures, grammar and patterns of spoken and written language in a variety of relevant contexts
- content, form and style, including tone and appropriateness of language in a range of literary and non-literary texts
- the cultures and traditions of Wales
- the status and use of the Welsh language in a bilingual country, historically and today, including in the community, society and the workplace

This proposal reflects feedback from stakeholders about the need to embed a broad range of meaningful learning contexts to enable learners to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. These contexts should support engaging and authentic teaching and learning, and valid language assessment. Stakeholders also wanted the learning contexts to develop learners' understanding and enjoyment of the Welsh language and culture, as well as an appreciation of their own Welshness.

The proposed learning contexts also draw on what stakeholders have told us is a successful and positive aspect of the current qualification, namely, 'Welsh language in Society', which enables the inclusion of contexts focusing on the historical and contemporary status and importance of Cymraeg in a range of real-life situations. This is an aspect that representatives from universities tell us would benefit learners progressing to higher education.

Q33: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Strongly agree

Q34: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that the AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualification should enable learners to develop their knowledge and skills for life, learning and work, now and in the future. We support the need to include a wide range of meaningful learning contexts to enable learners to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. We agree that the learning contexts should develop learners' understanding and enjoyment of the Welsh language and culture, as well as an appreciation of their own. More importantly, we believe that increasing the number of Welsh speakers in the workplace is crucial.

Content

Proposal 4: The AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications should require learners to demonstrate the following knowledge, understanding and skills in both oral and written language:

- demonstrate effectiveness in using the syntax and grammar of the language in a variety of forms and contexts for different purposes
- use language in the appropriate register in a wide range of contexts for creative purposes, to discuss literary and non-literary texts, to translanguage, and for a variety of practical purposes taking into account the purpose and the audience
- discuss, consider and respond spontaneously and in a deliberate and confident manner, to the views and opinions of others in order to reach conclusions
- use language checking technology appropriately but also demonstrate the ability to convey meaning without it
- critically analyse and convey a personal response to familiar and unfamiliar texts, using suitable linguistic terminology
- select relevant extracts from texts in discussions, in order to explain and exemplify personal views
- compare texts in order to understand and comment on what is common and different between them; evaluate information to summarise and draw conclusions

The proposed content builds on the strengths of the current qualification, as identified by stakeholders and subject experts. It also supports learners' progression by building on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed at 14-16 through the new GCSE Core Cymraeg.

Following feedback from stakeholders, including higher education representatives, there is a move away from an over-emphasis on 'correctness' towards an appreciation of how language can be adapted to be used effectively in a range of situations, contexts and registers. This would better enable them to develop an understanding of how to communicate effectively in different situations.

The skill of translanguageing has been retained as stakeholders told us that it is an essential skill for learners living, studying or working in a bilingual society. It supports the aim of helping learners to continue to study and use the language effectively, confidently and spontaneously in the future as part of a modern, bilingual Wales.

There is a focus on skills which develop confident, spontaneous and independent use of Cymraeg, especially in oracy assessments, enabling learners to apply their knowledge and skills in a broader range of contexts, including real life scenarios.

Q35: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Strongly agree

Q36: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that the AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications should require learners to demonstrate the knowledge, understanding and skills specified, both orally and in writing.

There is a specific focus on skills that will develop confident, spontaneous and independent use of the Welsh language, particularly in oral assessments. This will enable learners to apply their knowledge and skills in a wider variety of contexts, including real-life situations. We believe this is crucial.

Content

Proposal 5: There should be a reduction in the number of set texts that learners are required to study across the AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications to support manageability and engagement.

We propose a reduction in the number of set texts that learners are required to study at AS and A level. This reflects the concerns we have heard about the volume of content in the current qualification and the negative impact that this has on developing the skills needed for assessments given the limited teaching and learning time.

Stakeholders told us that there was repetition within and across units in the current AS and A level Welsh Second Language in terms of the type of content that learners were required to study. This can impact engagement and lead to duplication in assessment. Teachers felt that the current number of genres and texts could be reduced without negatively impacting opportunities for learners to develop and demonstrate their literary knowledge and communication skills. In particular, a reduction in set texts could provide enhanced opportunities for oracy assessment encouraging spontaneous use of language, given less of a focus on drawing upon learned content within group discussions.

The proposal also reflects the view shared with us that there needs to be a broader range of contexts within the qualification, including literary and non-literary, practical and creative, to ensure that the qualification appeals to a broad range of learners and reflects the breadth of language knowledge and skills which users of qualifications, including higher education and employers, tell us learners need to support further progression.

Q37. To what extent do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q38: Please explain your answer below.

We support the proposal regarding a reduction in the number of set texts that learners are required to study for AS and A level and we agree that it would reduce the volume of content in the current qualification. We agree that a reduction in set texts could provide better opportunities for assessing oracy skills spontaneously, as there is less focus on relying on learned content in group discussions. This would nurture more natural Welsh speakers.

Content

Proposal 6: The AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications should include opportunities to engage with a range of literary and non-literary texts from appropriate periods, including:

- a film
- poetry
- short stories
- non-literary texts in a variety of forms and for a variety of purposes

We propose removing the requirement for learners to study a drama. Whilst stakeholders were clear that this can be an engaging element of the current qualification, they reported that studying a film at AS and a drama at A2 can lead to duplication in assessment of knowledge and skills. In contrast, removing the requirement to study a drama could provide flexibility in the qualification design for learners to develop and demonstrate their skills in a broader range of contexts, including real-life practical situations.

Most stakeholders felt strongly about the need for learners to continue to study a film as a mandatory requirement within the new qualification. Learners and teachers told us that this is an engaging and successful element of the current qualification, and provides a new experience as film is not a part of the GCSE Core Cymraeg or Level 2 Additional Core Cymraeg qualifications. This also ensures a common experience of 'llunyddiaeth' with learners who have previously studied GCSE Cymraeg Language and Literature.

While studying a film, we are clear that learners should be given opportunities to engage with additional texts and sources of information, which reflect their personal interest. This can increase awareness of how Welsh media, arts and culture contribute to contemporary society and reflects what teachers have told us regarding the importance of synoptic assessment to enable learners to explore a range of texts independently.

Some stakeholders expressed concerns about the current focus on poetry within the AS qualification, noting that this can be a considerable 'step up' from GCSE and can impact how appealing the qualification is for some prospective learners. We propose that poetry is included as part of the A2 units and that it is assessed by non-examination assessment to support manageability and engagement.

Stakeholders also told us that the current volume of poetry and short stories can be unmanageable and that the teaching and learning time needed to cover content can detract from preparing learners effectively for assessment. We propose a reduction in the number of poems and short stories that learners are required to study to better support the development of skills.

As part of the engagement, we considered the potential to include a novel as an alternative set text given that some stakeholders referenced the availability of novels aimed at Welsh adult learners which could be adapted for learners at 16-19. Having reflected fully on the range of considerations shared with us, including manageability, we do not propose this change. It is important to note the recent inclusion of poetry and short stories in the new GCSE Core Cymraeg and the intention that this will provide a solid foundation for progression.

Q39: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Neither agree nor disagree

Q40: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that the AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications should include opportunities to study an appropriate variety of literary and non-literary texts from different periods. We feel that it may be possible to be flexible here – by offering the choice of a drama, film, short stories or even a short novel to ensure that the subject engages interest. As short stories and poetry have been included in the new GCSE Cymraeg – is there more scope for diversity here in the Sixth Form? Studying a whole range of texts would also give confidence to study the subject further.

Assessment structure

Proposal 7: There should be a broad range of assessment methods across the new AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications, including:

- oral examination
- external written examination
- non-examination assessment

Stakeholders, including teachers and learners, strongly value the broad range of assessment methods in the current qualification as it allows learners' knowledge, understanding and skills to be applied and assessed in a range of valid, authentic and engaging contexts. Learners appreciate the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in ways other than through external examinations, something that is not always offered across the range of AS and A level subjects that they study. We propose that a broad range of assessment methods continue to feature in the new qualification to reflect this positive feedback, and to support manageability and engagement for learners.

This proposal also reflects the changes in the range of national Cymraeg qualifications at 14-16. Retaining an appropriate amount of non-examination assessment ensures an element of flexibility for centres to continue to adapt teaching and learning to the needs of their learners, again supporting manageability, engagement and inclusivity.

Q41: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q42: Please explain your answer below.

We agree with the proposal to include a broad range of assessment methods, which will be beneficial for learners and teachers.

Assessment structure

Proposal 8: In the AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications, there should be opportunities for learners to be assessed in their oracy skills in AS and A2 units. The oracy assessments should include opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts, including literary and non-literary. The total assessment of oracy (across AS and A level) should contribute 45% of the marks to the overall qualification.

We propose retaining oral examinations as a mandatory requirement in both AS and A2 units in order to reflect the importance placed on oracy skills in this subject. Teachers recognise the importance that learners place on developing these skills and were clear that this is one of the main reasons for choosing Cymraeg as a subject. They also believe that this helps to make the qualification more appealing to a broader range of learners.

Teachers recognise the value of providing opportunities for learners to develop and demonstrate their oracy skills within literary contexts. Learners also told us that they enjoy this element and find it engaging. However, learners also stated they would welcome the opportunity to apply and adapt these skills to a broader range of contexts, recognising how this can support progression to further study and work. Wider stakeholders told us that the contexts for assessing oracy also need to reflect broader aims for creating confident and independent users of Cymraeg in a range of situations, including socially and in the world of work.

For this reason, we propose that the oracy assessments at A2 include both group and individual tasks, with a focus on applying communication skills in real-life practical situations, including in the workplace. These tasks will enable learners to demonstrate a broader range of oracy skills as confident and spontaneous speakers in both familiar and unfamiliar situations. This change will also support the drive towards aligning these qualifications with broader strategic aims for the Welsh language, including developing skills which can be mapped against the Common Language Descriptors being developed in the Code for describing Welsh language ability.

The proposal to increase the weighting of assessments focusing on oracy from 40% of the overall current qualification to 45% of the overall new qualification reflects the importance placed on oral communication skills and broader strategic aims for the Welsh language. Some stakeholders favoured increasing the weighting of oracy assessments to 50% to align with the weighting in the new GCSE Core Cymraeg. However, we propose a weighting of 45% to ensure there are sufficient opportunities to retain a broad range of assessment methods in the qualification including non-examination assessment and external written examinations.

Q43: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Neither agree nor disagree

Q44: Please explain your answer below.

In the AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications, we agree that learners' oracy skills should be assessed across the AS and A2 units and that oral assessments should include opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in a range of contexts, including literary and non-literary. This element makes the subject more appealing to a broader range of pupils.

We welcome the proposal that the oral assessments at A2 include group and individual tasks, with a focus on applying communication skills in real-life situations, including in the workplace.

However, we feel that the total of the oral assessments (across AS and A level) should contribute 50% of the marks to the overall qualification, rather than 45% as proposed. This will emphasise the importance of the oral element, in addition to aligning with the weighting in the new GCSE Core Cymraeg.

Assessment structure

Proposal 9: The AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications' oracy examinations should be assessed by an external examiner.

Stakeholders were clear that learners enjoy the experience of being assessed by an external examiner as it provides them with an authentic experience of using Cymraeg in unfamiliar situations outside of the classroom environment. It also adds a sense of status and occasion and differentiates assessment at AS and A level from prior qualification experience.

The proposal to require that learners are assessed by an external examiner can support consistency in marking and comparability in experience across cohorts and between centres. This supports perceptions of rigour, reliability and validity, as well as manageability for centres.

As part of the engagement, we asked stakeholders to consider any potential benefits of conducting oral assessments via alternative means, such as digital conferencing. Many teachers and learners felt strongly that this could impact the reliability, manageability and engagement of these important assessments.

Q45: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Strongly agree

Q46: Please explain your answer below.

We agree strongly that the oral examinations should be conducted by external examiners. By doing so, it gives the subject status and gives pupils responsibility and an opportunity to communicate with a person they do not already know. We believe that pupils benefit greatly from opportunities such as this and that it is very important to retain face-to-face

examinations. The use of external examiners also ensures consistency in standards and equitable opportunities for all pupils.

Assessment structure

Proposal 10: The AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications should provide opportunities for learners to be assessed on their oracy skills through group and individual tasks.

We propose retaining opportunities for learners' oracy skills to be assessed as part of a group. Stakeholders reported that learners enjoy interacting and using their oracy skills in this way, which lends itself to authentic language assessment and can help to reduce anxiety in the examination situation. It also supports the development of the skills needed to be confident and spontaneous speakers of Cymraeg and can help to avoid learners being overly reliant on pre-prepared materials.

However, learners and teachers also recognise the benefits of assessment aimed at developing and demonstrating a broader range of skills, for example through individual presentations or via tasks focused on one-to-one discussions with an examiner. This can enhance perceptions of fairness, and for some learners, provide a more accessible and inclusive assessment experience. On reflection, we propose that the new qualification should include both group and individual oracy assessment tasks as it better reflects the range of situations and contexts in which learners will use their oracy skills in future life, study and work.

Q47: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q48: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that the combination of individual and group work is crucial for learners.

Assessment structure

Proposal 11: The new AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications should include an assessment via external written examination in both AS and A2 units.

We propose that the new AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualifications continue to include assessment via external written examination in both AS and A2 units. Stakeholders, including teachers, were of the view that this can help to support perceptions of reliability, rigour and robustness, as well as support manageability.

Despite this, stakeholders felt strongly that two external written examinations at the end of the A level course presented manageability challenges for learners, causing assessment burden. We propose that the A2 units including assessment via external written examination is reduced to one.

Q49: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q50: Please explain your answer below.

We agree that it is important to continue to include external written examinations across AS and A2 units. Based on the views of stakeholders, we support the proposal that the A2 units be reduced to one written examination.

Assessment structure

Proposal 12: The assessment objectives (AOs) within the qualification should include coverage of a range of sub-strands which include (but are not limited to):

- AO1 Understanding and response (50%)
- Understand and respond coherently to a range of spoken, visual and written texts by selecting and interpreting relevant material.
- Collate, compare and evaluate information presented in a range of texts, cross-reference from one text to another, summarise and reach conclusions.
- Demonstrate knowledge of specific texts/topics and the significance of their social, historical and cultural background, analysing critically.
- Listen and respond to others and consider their contributions and points of view.
- Understand and interpret a text through translanguaging.

AO2 Expression and communication (50%)

- Communicate effectively, clearly and confidently, demonstrating a range of linguistic features.
- Apply knowledge of grammar effectively within various contexts.
- Communicate using various linguistic registers and make effective use of Welsh in a range of situations and contexts and for different purposes and audiences.
- Develop relevant viewpoints and ideas, summarise and reach conclusions.

The proposed assessment objectives reflect input from subject and assessment experts to ensure alignment with the qualification's purposes, aims and content.

They also build on the prior learning at 14-16 through Curriculum for Wales, as well as supporting alignment to the Common Reference Levels which will be defined within Welsh Government's Code for describing Welsh language ability (see section 3).

Q51. To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q52: Please explain your answer below.

We agree with the assessment objectives.

Proposal 13: Qualification Outline

The table below gives the outline of the current AS and A level Welsh Second Language qualification:

Current	Unit	Weighting
AS	Unit 1: speaking exam	15%
	Part 1: Film	
	Part 2: Personal response	
	Unit 2: Non-examination assessment	10%
	Unit 3: Written exam	15%
	Part 1: Language	
A2	Part 2: Poetry	
	Unit 4: Speaking exam	25%
	Part 1: Living through Cymraeg	
	Part 2: Drama	
	Part 3: Personal response	
	Unit 5: Written exam	15%
	Part 1: Welsh language in society	
	Part 2: Translanguaging	
	Unit 6: Written exam	20%
	Part 1: Language	
	Part 2: Short stories	

The AS and A level Core Cymraeg qualification outline below is for illustrative purposes only. We invite respondents to give feedback on any aspects. You may wish to consider; qualification structure, unit content, range of assessment methods, range of texts and elements impacting effective assessment including manageability, engagement, reliability and validity.

New	Unit	Weighting	Description
AS	Unit 1: Speaking exam	25%	Speaking exam: Film <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pair/group task – film (set text) • expressing an opinion – discussion centred on a choice of themes linked to set text (opportunity to explore additional literary and non-literary texts linked to theme)
	Unit 2: Written exam	15%	Written Exam: integrated unit focused on the Welsh language in society <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore a range of contexts impacting the development and status of the Welsh language in society (including engagement with extracts from literary and non-literary texts which enable learners to select areas of personal interest, including literary, historical, social, political and cultural factors) • translanguageing
A2	Unit 3: Speaking exam	20%	Speaking exam: practical tasks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pair/group and individual tasks to assess practical language skills
	Unit 4: Non examination assessment	10%	Non examination assessment: Literature including synoptic element <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poetry and short stories (2 set poems and 2 set short stories) • tasks centred on themes linked to set texts (opportunity to explore additional literary and non-literary texts linked to theme)
	Unit 5: Written exam	30%	Written exam: Elements of language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical tasks focused on development of language • synoptic language element

Q53: To what extent to you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Agree

Q54: Please explain your answer below.

We feel that it would be beneficial to increase the percentage of Unit 3 Speaking to 25% rather than 20%.

Could a short novel be added as an additional option in Unit 4?

Integrated Impact Assessment

Q55: Are you aware of any regulatory impacts arising from the proposals that we have not identified?

No

Q56: If yes, please explain your answer.

Q57: Are you aware of any negative impacts on people who share a protected characteristic* arising from the proposals that we have not identified?

*age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation

No

Q58: If yes, please explain your answer.

Q59: Are you aware of any impacts on the Welsh language arising from the proposals that we have not identified?

No

Q60: If yes, please explain your answer.