Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response

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Background information about Estyn

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

Estyn's 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 2000 and the Education Act 2005. In exercising its functions, Estyn 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 education and training providers in Wales;
- Quality of leadership and management of those education and training providers;
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners; and,
- Contribution made to the well-being of learners.

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

Estyn may give advice to the Assembly on any matter connected to education and training in Wales. To achieve excellence for learners, Estyn has 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.

INTRODUCTION

Estyn welcomes the suite of draft curriculum documents. In the main, each take good account of the four purposes of the new curriculum and the principle of subsidiarity. They provide sufficient flexibility to allow practitioners and providers to design local curricula relevant to the learners they teach.

We have responded to all questions in the consultation and included specific feedback on each of the areas of learning and experience. Overall, the what matters statements, achievement outcomes and planning for learning sections all reflect the priorities for learning well. We have highlighted a few key areas where we feel the guidance would benefit from further consideration and amendments.

- We acknowledge that familiarisation with the new arrangements and designing local curricula will take time and that all partners should appreciate that speed of the curriculum reform journey will differ between providers.
- A common theme throughout our response is the considerable need for relevant, high quality professional learning and resources to support the preparation, planning and implementation of the new curriculum. While its arrangements are not to be determined by the curriculum documents, the importance of professional learning cannot be underestimated. Without strong links between developments in professional learning and curriculum, there is a danger that some practitioners and, therefore, providers will not have the necessary understanding and skills to design or deliver high quality curricula for their learners.
- As change gathers pace around the new curriculum and the broadening of approaches to teaching and learning, Welsh Government, middle-tier organisations and providers should promote a national culture of professional learning and enquiry. This will include supporting providers to develop their own purpose-driven curricula, improve self-evaluation and improvement processes and to improve pathway planning in preparation for learners' life beyond school.
- The online presentation makes it difficult to see links and learner progression and so makes planning difficult. The text, although important to read, is often dense and may not engage practitioners. The Getting Started section for example could be less word-dense and use more infographics. The guidance must support practitioners to design local curricula that gradually build the breadth and depth of learning in a developmentally appropriate way. Therefore, it is important to be able to view elements alongside one another, for example the planning for learning alongside the progression steps. It is essential to view the achievement outcomes of several progression steps side-by-side. This will encourage practitioners to consider learning as a continuum.
- There is a need to secure the explicit, systematic and developmental teaching of digital skills in the curriculum, specifically the three strands of the digital competence framework that do not currently appear in an area of learning and experience, namely citizenship, interacting and collaborating, and producing. We suggest that this basic teaching should lie in the science and technology area of learning and experience, as outlined in our response to question B5. This will support all practitioners to provide effective opportunities for learners to apply and consolidate these skills across all areas of learning and experience, and ensure that the digital competence framework has the greatest impact on learners.
- The importance of practitioners using appropriate approaches to teaching and learning at all ages should be more explicit in guidance. This means that practitioners should choose the most relevant and appropriate approach or approaches for the learners, the situation, and the subject matter. This includes the use of an experiential approach to learning for all learners, where appropriate. Curriculum documents should emphasise that this sort of learning should not be limited to younger pupils, but the current good

practice in teaching and learning in the foundation phase should be extended and used across all ages, as appropriate, alongside other suitable methods.

- The cross curricular responsibilities and cross-cutting aspects of the curriculum are reflected in the documents fairly well. These should be more explicit within the detail of the areas of learning and experience in order to bolster their relevance throughout the curriculum. Links between the areas of learning and experience are often limited and it is difficult to see how the guidance promotes coherence and balance in the planning of local curricula well enough. This is particularly true for the requirements of human rights education, relationships and sexuality education and careers. Supporting professional learning in these areas will be crucial in achieving these ambitions.

- The guidance sets out important and useful messages relating to the principles of assessment. However, the importance of ensuring that formative assessment practices are a regular and valuable part of high quality teaching and learning is not clear enough. It would be helpful to emphasise that formative assessment should be an integral part of high quality learning and teaching. In order to bring about the strategies set out in this assessment proposal, there needs to be a strong focus on professional learning to ensure that leaders and practitioners have a strong understanding of a wide range of formative assessment procedures and the benefits these bring.

- Increased clarity around performance measures that will be used for local and national accountability will be helpful to those schools that perceive the current arrangements to be a barrier to change. This will help to provide reassurance and achieve the separation between assessment for learning and accountability. It is important that Welsh Government continue with the principles of co-construction and subsidiarity when developing these measures.

- The use of highly specific-subject terminology in some areas of learning and experience makes the document inaccessible to some practitioners. This should be reconsidered and amended to make guidance accessible and useful to all practitioners.

- In the future, the online curriculum needs to be flexible so that it can be kept current and relevant as the curriculum develops. If it includes resources, it will need to be made clear whether these have been quality assured or are simply ideas and resources for shared by practitioners for the interest of other practitioners.

- There is very little explicit reference to or guidance for encouraging learners' entrepreneurial and political awareness and understanding. Clearer guidance is needed to help practitioners to plan for developing these increasingly important aspects of learning at developmentally-appropriate levels throughout the curriculum.

- The guidance should explore more fully how the post-16 sector and employers can be more widely involved in supporting the transition to further training, education and employment as learners reach progression step 5. This should include guidance to support learners to have access to purposeful work-related experiences and effective careers information and guidance. In addition, the draft guidance includes a reference to careers education (see also response to B5 and B9).

- While satisfying the need for a balanced education, it is important that learners have the freedom to express their individuality and to pursue their interests and passions. The question as to what constitutes a 'meaningful experience' remains. Welsh Government should provide more detailed guidance for providers so that they can plan for nearly all learners in mainstream education to satisfy the achievement outcomes of progression step 5 across all what matters statements of all areas of learning and experience.

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

SECTION A

A1: **To what extent do you agree that the** *draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* **will help children and young people to become:**

- **ambitious, capable learners**
- **healthy, confident individuals**
- **ethical, informed citizens**
- **enterprising, creative contributors?**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	X			

Comments:

The draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance emphasises clearly the importance of the four purposes outlined in Successful Futures[1]. Throughout the overarching guidance and in each of the areas of learning and experience, it is clear that the four purposes must be at the heart of the curriculum of every provider. Alongside high quality support, guidance and training, which is essential to ensure success, the draft curriculum guidance is a good starting point for education professionals to develop a purpose-led curriculum.

The written content and video clips provide a comprehensive background to the new curriculum and should help practitioners and leaders to gain an understanding of how the guidance has developed. This should help practitioners to recognise that developing a curriculum that enables learners to realise the four purposes will require them to go through many of the same processes – trialling, reflecting, evaluating and modifying ideas and approaches. This could be further reinforced by making explicit links to professional learning and the teaching and leadership standards. The what matters statements, rationales for each area of learning and experience, achievement outcomes within each progression step, and planning for learning section will all be helpful to providers when designing a curriculum and particularly when ensuring that it meets the needs, interests and aspirations of the learners in their settings.

Welsh Government and middle tier organisations should continue to support practitioners to understand that the four purposes should be a constant reference point. Every practitioner throughout the continuum should be aware of how their work contributes to the overall ambition of progress towards achieving the four purposes for every learner. Otherwise, there is a danger that providers lose sight of them when engrossed in building an exciting, engaging and purposeful curriculum for their learners.

With high quality support, it is likely that strong, forward-thinking providers will ensure that the four purposes are at the heart of all they do. Similarly, skilful, reflective practitioners will recognise and value the specific part they play in developing rounded, well-educated young people with all the attributes linked to the four purposes.

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[1] Donaldson, G. (2015) *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales.* [.pdf]
Available online at: https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150225-successful-futures-en.pdf
Accessed on: 19/06/20119

With a very few exceptions, the current version of the curriculum provides very little explicit reference to or guidance for encouraging learners' entrepreneurial and political awareness and understanding to help them become 'informed citizens' and 'enterprising contributors'. These elements should be reflected more strongly, for example, in the Humanities, and Health and Wellbeing areas of learning and experience at all progression steps, as well as though the cross-cutting elements and considerations section.

A2: **Looking at the *What Matters statements*, to what extent do you agree that these sum up the priorities for children and young people's learning?**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
	X			

The what matters statements for all areas of learning and experience provide skilled practitioners with plenty of scope to design a curriculum that is relevant to the learners they teach. The statements sum up succinctly a suitable set of priorities for learning. They are broad enough for providers to interpret them in a way that enables them to tailor their provision for all learners, but specific enough to ensure that they gain some common experiences, knowledge and skills between the ages of 3 and 16. To achieve this balance, it is important that providers can access suitable high quality support and resources to understand these broad priorities and think about them creatively, particularly in the early days of their curriculum development.

However, at present, it could be perceived that the what matters statements operate at different levels in different areas of learning and experience; they are very broad in humanities, yet far more specific in mathematics and numeracy, for example. This may lead to some confusion for practitioners and it would be useful to anticipate possible misunderstandings by providing a clear rationale that explains the reasons behind these differences, which were considered carefully and at length by the groups working on the areas of learning and experience.

Most areas of learning and experience have written their what matters statements in a way that ensures that non-specialists understand the statements, without over-simplifying the language used. Science and technology is a good example of this. However, there are a few instances of the unnecessary use of overly-complex language, for example in Mathematics and Numeracy. There is a danger that this may discourage non-specialists to engage purposefully in these areas.

A3: **Do you think the *draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* could be improved?**

Yes	x	No	

If yes, how do you think it could be improved?

Leaders and practitioners should understand the background and rationale to the draft curriculum that is presented in the Get Started section, as well as the overviews of each area of learning and experience. However, in its current form, this section is somewhat lengthy and 'dry'. As a result, there is a danger that many will not read this important information before moving on to the detail of the areas of learning and experience. To avoid this happening, it may be helpful to consider a more engaging, less word-dense format, perhaps using more graphics and keeping text clear and incisive.

There is a great deal for practitioners to read elsewhere as well. This is especially true for primary practitioners who will need to consider all of the areas of learning and experience. Several elements of the guidance are repeated in every area of learning and experience. This includes information about:

- a transformational curriculum
- progression
- the 'principles of progression'
- developing a broad and balanced curriculum
- cross-cutting themes

Consideration should be given to bringing this common information together in one place for all areas of learning and experience, perhaps in the overarching guidance, to avoid repetition.

The development of the online resource has the potential to engage practitioners successfully to support the development of the new curriculum. We welcome the move to an online resource that can be amended from time to time so that it remains current. Improvements could be made to the online presentation of the curriculum to make it easier for practitioners to make effective use of the materials.

It is important that practitioners can see several levels of progression horizontally across a page. This will enable them to see the sections of the continuum of learning that are likely to apply to their learners' age and stage of development. For example, a teacher is likely to want to consider the achievement outcomes in progression step 2 alongside those in progression step 3 so that they can appreciate the learning that needs to take place next. As the curriculum is currently presented, this would involve considerable scrolling up and down the page, resulting in frustration and a need to print whole sections of the curriculum. As the intention is for this to be a web-based curriculum, which may change over time, it is important to encourage practitioners to use it electronically and not to print documents.

A possible option would be to modify the site so that individuals have a menu of options from which to choose. More functionality and a customizable approach would be welcomed by practitioners and other users and, particularly as people become more used to the site, would save considerable time. It would also help to future-proof the curriculum and ensure that practitioners and other educational professionals are always reminded of the rationales and support that lie behind elements like the achievement outcomes.

A4: **To what extent do the assessment proposals support settings and schools to identify a learner's strengths, achievements and areas for improvement so they can support a learner's progression by identifying next steps?**

Extremely supportive	Very supportive	Moderately supportive	Slightly supportive	Not at all supportive
		X		

The guidance sets out important and useful messages relating to the principles of assessment. However, all assessment arrangements need to include clear guidance in the following areas:

- Assessment is key to supporting progression and is integral to learning and teaching. It should not be confused with those activities that contribute to external accountability and local, regional or national monitoring.

- Assessment for formative purposes should be prioritised over summative assessment under the new arrangements.
- The achievement outcomes should be used as the basis for building an accurate picture of how a learner is progressing along the continuum, in the context of the four purposes of the curriculum. They should not be used as a best-fit model at a set age or point in time to produce a summative assessment of a learner.

The guidance identifies clearly the need to separate assessment for learning from accountability at a national level. However, further direction is needed to advise and assure local authorities and regional consortia that they must not collect and use teacher assessment for accountability purposes. This would help to focus assessment on supporting learners' progress by identifying strengths, areas for improvement and next steps.

There is a need to design and communicate clearly the measures that will be used for local and national accountability. This will help provide reassurance and achieve the separation between formative assessment and accountability. However, it is important that Welsh Government continue with the principles of co-construction and subsidiarity when developing these measures, so that they command the confidence of practitioners across Wales. There is a danger that practitioners may be reluctant to engage with the new curriculum if they feel that the profession has had too little input into making decisions about accountability measures are something that the profession.

Under the section 'Context: Progression and Curriculum for Wales 2022', the guidance notes that: 'No matter a learner's age, the focus will be on ensuring that each individual securely reaches the achievement outcomes at a progression step before proceeding to work towards the next'. Providers could interpret this as learners needing to achieve all 'achievement outcomes' in a progression step before moving on. While this is later clarified to show that, 'a learner may be working towards achievement outcomes relating to specific aspects of learning at one progression step but working towards achievement outcomes relating to other aspects of learning at a different progression step,' the initial statement is not clear. It would be worthwhile reconsidering the initial statement to eliminate any ambiguity.

In the section 'What is the purpose of assessment?' it is not clear what is proposed by asserting that assessment should be 'proportionate to its benefits.' While it is worthwhile highlighting that providers should not create onerous arrangements in relation to assessment, the proportionality of these is difficult to define. The final bullet on this page already identifies that 'Assessment should provide relevant and proportionate information about progress and success in relation to all the intended learning'. This is sufficient. If the guidance wishes to set out that assessment arrangements should not be overly burdensome on learners, it could state this.

When setting out the uses of the online personalised assessment, the guidance helpfully re-enforces that assessments are solely formative and they have not been designed to be used as an accountability measure.

The penultimate bullet under 'key considerations' in the section 'enabling active learners' notes that learners should develop the capacity to 'develop their own success criteria'. However, there is no guidance on this in the main section. Providers should have a clear and purposeful approach to developing this important skill as learners make progress.

The guidance identifies clearly that e-portfolios give learners 'opportunities to exemplify what is important to their own progression contributes to developing independent and lifelong learners'. However, the guidance needs to be clear about how e-portfolios will

support learning and progression, as stated in the 'key considerations'. It will be important to clarify:

- the purpose of e-portfolios and clear messages about how they should not be used
- who has ownership of and access to the e-portfolios, for example, whether parents would have a right to see a learners' e-portfolio
- how e-portfolios do not become a bureaucratic burden on practitioners, particularly of younger learners
- any cross-over between e-portfolios and feedback and reporting systems for parents.

A5: **In relation to reporting to parents and carers, please tell us your views on:**

- **the role of the learner in contributing to the reporting process**
- **the role of the parent/carer in the reporting process**
- **the information you would want to include.**

Estyn welcomes the importance given to involving learners and parents/carers in the reporting process.

The involvement of parents/carers will help capture a learner's progress inside and outside of the provider, but the guidance should be clear that providers should, as far reasonably practicable, communicate with both parents/carers, for example, when they are separated.

Clear examples of ongoing parental involvement would benefit the guidance and would support providers to create purposeful, informative and inclusive reporting arrangements. For example, they should arrange useful meetings between parents/carers and practitioners that allow for purposeful dialogue. These can also include learner-led parent-teacher meetings to communicate learners' progress. In this way, learners are able to explain their own progress and open up a dialogue between home, school and the learner.

Reporting to parents should be flexible, beneficial and regular. Reporting should be honest. It should provide a clear and useful description of progress and attainment in all areas of learning and experience. It should comment on learners' personal and social development in relation to the four purposes. Reporting should be constructive, encouraging and motivating, and focus on strengths and priorities for development, and identify next steps for learning. It form part of a dialogue between home and school.

Estyn welcomes the important role learner voice should play in the reporting process. This supports Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and recognises learners as key partners in the learning process. It will help parents/carers and practitioners to understand more clearly what learners understand and what they find difficult. It will help to encourage dialogue between learner, home and school and provide information to parents/carers that will allow them to support the learner and can give guidance to practitioners that they can use to help shape teaching.

SECTION B

Section B – Detailed questions

B1: **How helpful would you find the *[draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance](#)* in developing a curriculum for your learners?**

Extremely helpful	Very helpful	Moderately helpful	Slightly helpful	Not helpful at all
		X		

Estyn welcomes a coherent curriculum for children and young people from 3 – 16. A coherent curriculum has considerable benefits and should help to ensure appropriate progress for all learners throughout that continuum. The draft curriculum has the potential to provide that coherence. Its focus on the same clearly defined purposes, the same areas of learning and experience and a set of clear enabling progression steps that span all ages and stages of development enables providers and practitioners to see a full picture, from 3 to 16 and beyond. The draft curriculum provides confident senior leaders and creative practitioners and support staff with a sound basis upon which to start exploring the possibilities of the curriculum. It offers freedom and flexibility within a clear framework.

To ensure the best progress and outcomes for all learners, leaders and practitioners will require high quality professional learning and resources, as well as time to consider their approach to designing, evaluating and modifying a curriculum for their provider. The process will take time and it is important that all partners in the process acknowledge this and do not make unreasonable demands of providers too early on in the process, but appreciate that the curriculum reform journey will differ between providers.

Over time, it may be helpful to develop areas online where providers can access further guidance and support for the curriculum. However, it would be beneficial to indicate whether guidance, support, resources and ideas have been quality assured or are simply practitioners sharing their own ideas and resources. Both may have a place, but their origins need to be made clear.

B2: **How well do you think the *draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* allows for all children and young people to gain a broad range of learning experiences?**

You may want to consider learning across the different disciplines and subjects which form part of an area of learning and experience.

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	x			

The breadth encompassed by the what matters statements of the six areas of learning and experience and driven by the four purposes is considerable. It allows for providers to offer learning experiences for children and young people across all current subjects and disciplines, but encourages providers to think carefully about how they plan experiences that lead to effective learning. The draft curriculum encourages a strong focus on providers developing relevant, authentic experiences across all areas of learning and experience. Evidence from Estyn inspections suggests that, generally, this type of learning experience, supported by high quality teaching, helps to engage children and young people effectively and encourages positive attitudes to learning at all ages[2].

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[2] Estyn (2018b) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2017-18.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/ESTYN_Annual%20Report_Accessible_English__2018.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

Each area of learning and experience explores clearly the various ways in which children and young people can gain a broad experience in and across the areas from age 3 to 16. The 'experiences, knowledge and skills' of the 'planning for learning' section identifies the sorts of experiences, knowledge and skills that providers need to offer learners at each progression step. This encourages practitioners to think about the various possible approaches to the curriculum at all ages, and includes important messages about multidisciplinary and more discrete approaches as learners move through the continuum. If providers use this information well and can access appropriate professional support when designing their curriculum, it should be possible for all learners to gain a broad range of learning experiences that will lead them to realizing the four principles of the curriculum.

B3: **How well do you think _draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance_ allows for all children and young people to specialise from age 14 in a particular discipline or subject?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	x			

The draft guidance provides a suitable national framework for providers to build on to develop their own curricula. One of the stated aims is for Curriculum for Wales 2022 to allow for a broadening of learning, and for providers to be more flexible in their approaches. The overarching guidance clearly states that the area of learning and experience guidance is not intended to provide comprehensive or exhaustive syllabi. School leaders will be able to adapt and tailor their curriculum to meet the needs of their learners. The draft guidance enables providers to design a curriculum encompassing all areas of learning and experience that enriches and extends the experiences of its learners. This includes the facility for all learners to focus purposefully on disciplines or subjects that suit their needs, career aspirations and wishes.

It is imperative that learners experience the positive benefits of a broad, engaging and enriching curriculum that encompasses all areas of learning and experience, even if they do not wish to follow a qualification route in all of them. The study of all areas of learning and experience up to 16 will enable learners to maintain a broad set of interests and experiences for as long as possible, which provide them with a wide range of options post-16. However, it is important to consider how providers can provide purposeful, engaging options for areas in which learners have not chosen to specialise.

The 14-16 curriculum cannot be seen in isolation from the next iteration of qualification development. It is also essential that the qualifications framework helps learners to demonstrate the breadth and depth of their learning. It is possible that this could be achieved through continuing learning and experiences within the Welsh Baccalaureate.

The curriculum has narrowed to the disadvantage of learners over recent years. In 2018, we reported that:

- The curriculum in secondary schools is more limited than it was two years ago
- Many schools are reducing the number of option subjects to allow for extra curriculum time and emphasis for English, Mathematics, Welsh, Science and Skills Challenge Certificate – due to changes to performance measures.

- The choice of vocational courses has also been reduced and this impacts on the appropriateness of the curriculum available for many vulnerable learners
- In general, schools do not promote the full range of available technical or vocational courses at further education colleges or other providers to all learners.
- The effectiveness of careers advice and guidance varies too much between schools. Only a minority of schools provide learners with an extensive range of advice, including, for example, information regarding apprenticeships. Often, this is because practitioners do not know enough about this pathway[3].

The draft guidance gives providers the autonomy to avoid some of these pitfalls and to consider the need of their learners, either themselves or in partnership with others. As noted in other sections of this response, each area of learning and experience specifies clearly the expectations for learners in this age bracket. Work is currently underway to consider how qualifications will change to meet the needs of the new curriculum. The curriculum that providers design and the qualifications for which learners enter are two related but distinct entities. The guidance would empower providers to design a curriculum that will meet the needs of their learners and lead to suitable pathways for the full range of learners in their schools or settings.

While satisfying the need for a balanced education, it is important that learners have the freedom to express their individuality and to pursue their interests and passions. Welsh Government should provide more detailed guidance for providers so that they can understand the intended flexibility in terms of pathways that will be available to learners as part of this curriculum. Satisfying the achievement outcomes of progression step 5 across all what matters statements of all areas of learning and experience is unlikely to be a reasonable or beneficial expectation of many learners. However, clarification is needed as to what constitutes a 'meaningful experience' in those aspects of the curriculum that learners choose not to focus on for progression step 5. This may include experiences and courses that do not lead to formal qualifications, but can be accredited in a meaningful way so that they are perceived as important to learners, practitioners, parents and other stakeholders. Given the universal nature of health and wellbeing, for example, it is critically important that learning experiences in Health and Wellbeing continue for all learners between the ages of 14 and 16, irrespective of any choices they make at 14, in order to support them through adolescence and prepare them for adult life.

In addition, the draft guidance includes a reference to careers education (see also response to B5 and B9). There is currently a duty for learners aged 13 to 16 to be provided with a programme of careers education and the Welsh Government is considering the future legislative provisions required. Estyn believes that careers education is a beneficial facet of learners' experience and is a valuable component that should be retained.

B4: **The *draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* is intended to support practitioners and practitioners to design a curriculum specific to children and young people. To what extent will practitioners and practitioners have the flexibility and support to do this?**

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
X				

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[3] Estyn (2018c) *The impact of the Learning and Skills Measure on vulnerable learners.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Vulnerable%20learners%20En.pdf
Accessed on: 17/06/2019

The draft guidance provides a framework that is supportive to practitioners and practitioners. It gives them the flexibility to design their curriculum to meet the needs of their own community. Many providers will welcome this. However, this will require strong, confident leaders who are bold enough to reimagine the nature of the curriculum they offer and take measured risks for the benefit of their learners. For example, a particular challenge for many secondary schools may be to reconsider the way staff collaborate to plan and deliver the curriculum and to develop more flexibility in timetabling and class organisation. Leaders will need to have secure self-evaluation processes in place to underpin their school improvement planning. Support from leadership and high quality professional learning opportunities for building leadership capacity will be an essential factor in the successful implementation of Curriculum for Wales 2022 (please see response to B13).

To date, primary schools have responded more flexibly when beginning to test and try out a range of alternative approaches to their current ways of working. A particular issue for secondary schools will be to strike the right balance between a broad, rich and purpose-led curriculum offer and the need to have a specific focus on subjects/disciplines for the purpose of qualifications. For example, many will need support to build the capacity of their staff to deliver learning experiences that differ from current approaches. Leaders and staff will need access to high quality, relevant professional learning and resources.

In order for practitioners and practitioners to feel supported to design a curriculum specific to their children and young people, providers will appreciate early guidance from Welsh Government on changes to accountability measures and other aspects of wider education reform. This information will encourage leaders to be bold in providing their staff with the flexibility to design a curriculum that focuses more closely on the needs and interests of children and young people. Currently, the curriculum in many schools is too narrow due to schools' response to current accountability measures. As mentioned in our response to A4, the guidance will need to make clear that assessment arrangements are not to be used by local authorities and middle-tier organisations for the purposes of accountability.

B5: **How well do you think the *draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* supports learners to develop skills in the cross-curricular responsibilities (literacy, numeracy and digital competence) and other cross-cutting themes (e.g. Welsh dimension and international perspective, wider skills, careers and work-related experiences, relationships and sexuality education)?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	x			

Cross curricular responsibilities (literacy, numeracy, digital competence)
Estyn welcomes the draft statutory guidance that sets out clearly the requirement for providers to embed the cross-curricular responsibilities of literacy, numeracy and digital competence in the areas of learning and experience. However, stronger references to the cross-curricular responsibilities could be made in the 'Progression' section of the guidance. Although there is reference to the requirement for providers to plan for progression in the cross-curricular responsibilities on, it may be helpful to signpost the reader to this section.

Our latest Annual Report[4] identified important shortcomings in schools' provision for the development of learners' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum:

- Nearly a quarter of [primary] schools need to improve the way that they plan for pupils to use literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in their work across the curriculum (p.29)
- in the majority of [secondary] schools, pupils do not apply their numeracy skills well enough in contexts other than mathematics lessons (p.39)
- [in a half of secondary schools] provision for the development of pupils' literacy, particularly writing, and numeracy across the curriculum is inconsistent. There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their skills progressively in authentic contexts (p.44)
- [in maintained all-age schools] pupils in the secondary phase do not apply their literacy and numeracy skills effectively enough across the curriculum (p.52).

Although not statutory, the guidance sets out the intention for the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework and the Digital Competence Framework to continue to be available to support providers in their planning. This is important to ensure that delivery of the new curriculum addresses these gaps. It will be important to consider strengthening reference to the usefulness of this framework in the new guidance documents.

Overall, the areas of learning and experience acknowledge the importance of developing literacy, numeracy and digital competence throughout the curriculum and begin to explore this in the 'developing a broad and balanced curriculum' section. Most explore some of the opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy and digital competence and this will encourage providers to think carefully about these cross-curricular responsibilities as they design their local curricula. It would be helpful to consider how best to support practitioners to ensure that opportunities across the curriculum to consolidate and apply these important skills are at a level commensurate with learners' general ability and understanding. For example, this will avoid practitioners having lower expectations of the numeracy skills a pupil can use in science than they have achieved in mathematics lessons. This is particularly important for secondary schools, where there is a tendency to rely on practitioners of mathematics, English/Welsh and IT/ICT/digital skills to introduce and teach the skills that learners will then use across the curriculum.

Guidance should emphasise that opportunities to apply literacy, numeracy and digital skills should be authentic and arise naturally from the subject matter. Guidance should state explicitly that it is not appropriate to include tenuously-linked literacy, numeracy or digital activities into every lesson. The curriculum needs to make it clear that any tasks should be purposeful and enrich what is being taught.

The draft guidance sets out clear expectations for practitioners to enable learners to develop learners' digital competence skills across the curriculum. However, it is not clear how or where these skills will be taught explicitly.

Most practitioners see the digital competence framework as the digital equivalent of the literacy and numeracy framework. They understand and support the notion of the framework being a tool to guide how they develop learners' digital competence across the curriculum. Most practitioners' understanding is that (in secondary schools), English/Welsh practitioners teach English/Welsh skills and mathematics practitioners

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[4] Estyn (2018b) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2017-18.* [.pdf]
Available online at:
https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/ESTYN_Annual%20Report_Accessible_English__2018.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

teach mathematical skills. Other practitioners can then provide opportunities for learners to consolidate and apply these as literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.

Understandably, therefore, there is an expectation from many that someone somewhere will teach learners digital skills (the strands of the DCF) that other practitioners can then provide opportunities for pupils to consolidate and apply to develop their digital competence across the curriculum. However, the only strand of the digital competence framework that appears in an area of learning and experience is 'data and computational thinking', which is included in Science and Technology. Opportunities to develop elements of the other three strands (citizenship, interacting and collaborating, and producing) appear occasionally in other areas of learning and experience, but references are vague and do not ensure continuity and progression. In addition, when other areas of learning and experience refer to developing digital skills, they identify links with Science and Technology. These are misleading, as they include incorrect references to aspects they assume to appear in area of learning and experience, but do not. This includes references in Languages, Literacy and Communication to 'Developing technological skills to research' and 'Digital technology when creating and designing'.

Welsh Government should consider how the guidance can secure the teaching of all strands of the digital competence framework. The long-term goal may be for all practitioners and other education professionals to be proficient enough to teach the digital skills necessary for their own area of learning and experience. However, until that time, responsibility for the explicit teaching of all digital skills needs to be placed somewhere other than as a cross-curricular responsibility. This will avoid the risk that some pupils will not acquire the full range of digital skills because elements of the digital competence framework have not been taught systematically or progressively. Of particular importance, and of considerable concern, is the specific teaching of online safety. While it is clearly a very important part of the role of all practitioners across all areas of learning and experience, including it as a specific element of an area of learning and experience would strengthen its position. We suggest that the teaching of all digital skills is best placed in the Science and Technology area of learning and experience.

Other cross-cutting themes
Overall, the guidance presents a coherent rationale for the cross-cutting elements as part of developing a rich and relevant curriculum. However, consideration needs to be given to the labelling of these cross-cutting themes. In the overarching guidance, these aspects are covered under the heading 'other cross-cutting elements and considerations'. When the reader moves to the areas of learning and experience, the same aspects are under the heading 'developing a broad and balanced curriculum' and are referred to as 'cross-curricular responsibilities'. This may be confusing to an initial reader. If a reader goes straight to the areas of learning and experience documents, they miss the rationale behind the inclusion of each of the cross-cutting elements. Important information may be missed, for example, the diagram showing the characteristics, attributes and values of wider skills.

On a very few occasions, the language, and therefore its intended meaning, is not sufficiently clear for all practitioners, for example:

> 'the impact of the interplay between these various relationships'(p.14) when describing learners' understanding, appreciation and analysis of the Welsh dimension and the international perspective.
> 'marshalling critical and logical processes to analyse and understand situations' (p.15) when defining critical thinking and problem solving.

In the current format reference to the cross-cutting themes is spread across the guidance document and each of the areas of learning and experience. This leads to repetition and

also to a variation in approach to the content provided. To ensure the importance of these themes is realised, it would be more useful to bring the rationales in the guidance document together with exemplification from each area of learning and experience together into one location. This will help to avoid any negative impact on the way in which their importance is perceived.

Relationships and Sexuality Education

The traditional arrangements of sex and relationships education were often too focused on the biological elements of puberty. Estyn welcomes the mandatory introduction of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in the new curriculum. Introducing it as a statutory cross-curricular responsibility will help to broaden the learning experience and increase the emphasis given to rights, relationships, equity and emotions.

The draft overarching guidance helpfully refers to the topic headings contained in UNESCO's technical guidance for sexuality education[5]. However, it does not directly refer to the technical guidance nor its internationally agreed definition. Including these in the draft guidance documents would signal a move away from traditional models and emphasise a future-proofed shift towards a rights-based, gender-focused and evidence-informed approach.

Overall, the guidance documents for the areas of learning and experience explain helpfully how they contribute to the new RSE requirements. These will support practitioners to understand their cross-curricular responsibilities for RSE. However, greater linkages to RSE could be made across the progression steps in the 'experience, knowledge and skills' sections of each area of learning and experience. This would help to secure the RSE entitlement as children grow and further enable practitioners to design an innovative curriculum that broadens and deepens learners' experience of RSE in a developmentally appropriate way.

Religious Education

Estyn supports the inclusion of religious education in the Humanities area of learning and experience. Placing religious education in an area of learning and experience will strengthen the subject's position in the statutory curriculum. The concepts and skills in religious education clearly contribute to the four purposes, most explicitly in developing our children and young people to be ethical informed citizens.

Opportunities to include a wide range of learning and experiences traditionally taught in Religious education lessons can clearly be identified in the experience, knowledge and skills progression steps in the draft Humanities curriculum. Providers will have the flexibility to decide whether these concepts and skills are taught in discreet religious education lessons or in a more integrated way.

Aspects of religious education can also clearly be seen within the Health and Wellbeing and Expressive Arts areas of learning and experience and these links are briefly identified in the draft document. The links between the areas of learning and experience could be further strengthened as practitioners develop a greater understanding of the interdependencies between them.

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[5] UNESCO (2018) *International technical guidance on sexuality education: An evidence-informed approach.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/in/documentViewer.xhtml?v=2.1.196&id=p::usmarcdef_0000260770&file=/in/rest/annotationSVC/DownloadWatermarkedAttachment/attach_import_d8d4de18-19d0-4a35-8eb2-ab5eaa5ca5d3%3F_%3D260770eng.pdf&updateUrl=updateUrl1673&ark=/ark:/48223/pf0000260770/PDF/260770eng.pdf.multi&fullScreen=true&locale=en#%5B%7B%22num%22%3A47%2C%22gen%22%3A0%7D%2C%7B%22name%22%3A%22XYZ%22%7D%2C0%2C842%2C0%5D Accessed on: 10/06/2019

Estyn is aware that Welsh Government has commissioned a religious education framework to support practitioners in the delivery of religious education and hopefully to be accepted by SACRE's as the Agreed Syllabus. This document should reflect as closely as possible the experience, knowledge and skills statements in the Humanities draft guidance, enabling practitioners to see the direct link between the two documents. It is anticipated that the Agreed Syllabus will strengthen subject-specific support for practitioners, which will be useful for non-specialists who may be delivering aspects of religious education for the first time.

Welsh Dimension and International Perspective
Estyn welcomes the firm commitment that has been made in the draft curriculum to the inclusion of a Welsh dimension in the education of all learners. We support the notion that developing learners' understanding of Wales and Welshness should link to an international perspective so that they gain an appreciation of the place of Wales within the world. This cross-cutting element of the curriculum promotes the importance of building pupils' understanding of this. We support the aim to secure these elements of the curriculum as the responsibility of all practitioners. The explanation in the 'other cross-cutting elements and considerations' provides a comprehensive overview of what is meant by the Welsh dimension and international perspective.

However, although the specific guidance for all areas of learning and experience makes reference to the Welsh Dimension and International Perspective, the level of detail included varies widely. For example, guidance for the Expressive Arts, and Health and Wellbeing provide some practical suggestions for the delivery of these aspects in their area of learning and experience, while Mathematics and Numeracy provides a more theoretical basis for the inclusion of these elements. A theoretical approach only may discourage practitioners from exploring more thoroughly the potential to enhance learners' experience, knowledge, skills and understanding in these cross-cutting themes. Practitioners would welcome more practical guidance, especially at the start of the new curriculum arrangements, where, for many, including this element of the curriculum in their thinking, planning and delivery of teaching and learning will be quite unfamiliar. Further consideration of how the exciting possibilities of introducing a local, national and international perspective to teaching and learning could be communicated more effectively to providers and practitioners would enhance the current guidance.

References to these cross-cutting themes in the progression steps for learning or in the experiences, knowledge and skills also vary widely between areas of learning and experience. For example, the Welsh dimension and international perspective appears strongly in the Humanities area, but is less evident in Science and Technology and Mathematics and Numeracy. This may lead to an assumption that the Welsh dimension, and international perspective are a more important element of some areas of learning and experience than others.

Clearly, the Humanities area of learning and experience offers many rich opportunities for extensive learning to take place about the history, geography, religion and business culture in Wales in the past and present. This might usefully exploit opportunities to develop and enrich learners' understanding of the development of industry and entrepreneurship in Wales and consideration of how this relates to the national and international economic picture. However, there is plenty to study in other areas of learning and experience too. Although creating tenuous links between elements of the curriculum is unhelpful, practitioners will benefit from more clarity and exemplification in the guidance to identify authentic, relevant connections to the Welsh dimension and the international perspective consistently well across all areas of learning and experience than is currently provided in the draft curriculum.

Wider Skills

The section in the overview on promoting learners' wider skills is succinct and accessible to practitioners working with learners of all ages. It expresses clearly the benefits to learners of developing a wide range of skills. There are clear links with the current wider skills agenda in education, so it is likely that practitioners will be familiar with the four skills identified, as well as many of the characteristics, attributes and values associated with them. Estyn welcomes this continued focus on developing learners' wider skills, provided that learning happens through authentic experiences across all areas of learning and experience. Misunderstanding in the implementation of the current curriculum has sometimes led to an over-emphasis on the development of skills to the detriment of knowledge and understanding. The guidance should encourage providers and practitioners to achieve an appropriate balance between developing skills, knowledge and understanding in all domains of learning.

Careers and work-related experiences

It is helpful that the draft guidance has appropriate headings to explain the four key areas in each area of learning and experience to develop learners' understanding of careers and work-related experiences (learning from careers and labour market information (LMI), linking the area of learning and experience to careers and work-related experiences, work-related experiences, understanding post-16 and higher education opportunities). These provide a clear focus for school planning.

A few areas of learning and experience give particularly useful details about careers and LMI in their areas (Expressive Arts; Languages, literacy and communication regarding international languages), or about linking their area to careers and work-related experiences (Expressive Arts, Humanities, Languages, literacy and communication, and Mathematics and Numeracy). The Expressive Arts provides helpful, relevant examples of work-related activities in the area of learning and experience to provide a starting point for school planning. However, these examples of work-related activities are directly copied in the guidance sections of all other areas of learning and experience. This is not helpful as it does not support planning for progression in developing learners' skills or provide a relevant stimulus for work-related activities across the curriculum.

The section headed 'Understanding post-16 and higher education opportunities' is generic across all the areas of learning and experience and currently lacks detail. This will not help progression to post-16 in each area of learning and experience. There is an opportunity to involve post-16 sectors and Careers Wales in each area of learning and experience to develop the detail on progression pathways for learners. This approach will help to expand the contention of this section to provide advice and guidance for learners and their parents/carers, for example, by explaining the apprenticeships, further education courses and higher education opportunities available.

It would also help to map out the range of pathways available for learners with different needs and abilities. Estyn has reported on a number of occasions that the only pathway presented is returning to sixth form, studying A-levels and going to university[6] [7]. Schools do not do enough to promote the full range of technical or vocational courses at further education colleges or apprenticeships in work-based learning providers to all learners. The effectiveness of careers advice and guidance varies too much between schools as

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[6] Estyn (2018c) *The impact of the Learning and Skills Measure on vulnerable learners.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/impact-learning-and-skills-measure-vulnerable-learners Accessed on: 19/06/2019

[7] Estyn (2017b) *Careers – The implementation and the careers and world of work framework in secondary schools.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Careers%20-%20Thematic%20survey%20report%20%28002%29_0.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

only a minority of schools provide learners with an extensive range of advice including information about apprenticeships.

The section 'Learning from careers and LMI' in the Health and Wellbeing draft guidance is too broad and does not relate to how this area of learning and experience can use careers advisers and other external stakeholders to explore this cross-curricular aspect. It would be helpful for this guidance to refer to Estyn's thematic report evidence on careers and informed decisions, for example, in providing guidance on how this should be delivered to learners, or even in referencing the current Careers and World of Work framework. Progression examples are the same as for Expressive Arts, and so this does not offer any alternative methods of delivering this very wide subject area.

The 'work-related experiences' section is vague in most of the area of learning and experience guidance documents. This section could be strengthened by including a few specific examples for each of the areas of learning and experience rather than general comments about collaborating and having access to employers. This section is not differentiated enough to represent the distinctive nature of work-related experiences for each area of the curriculum.

A possible approach would be to revise the 'Careers and World of Work (CWOW) Framework' to enable learners to develop skills and make informed decisions. It would be helpful to adapt this framework to include the 3 – 11 year old age range and refresh it to be more relevant for 11 – 16 year olds, with updated examples to support planning to be more engaging and innovative.

A revised framework could usefully draw from findings from Estyn's thematic reports on careers and work-related experiences.[8] [9] It should emphasise the importance of improving the scope and quality of careers advice and guidance providing good quality training and information to staff, building collaborative arrangements with further education and work-based learning providers, and developing schools' evaluation of their provision in providing informed decisions, for example, in how they provide for work-related experiences, work experience or sourcing up to date information on courses, career opportunities and progression routes to further education, training or employment.

Human Rights Education
Estyn welcomes the inclusion of human rights education as a cross-cutting theme in the new curriculum. The proposal set out in the consultation document offers a significant step forward in meeting Wales' international obligations in relation to Article 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) [10] [11] [12] [13].

In general, the overarching draft guidance document refers helpfully to the principles set out by UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training – to learn about human rights, learning through human rights and learning for human rights. As a cross-cutting

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[8] Estyn (2017b) *Careers – The implementation and the careers and world of work framework in secondary schools.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Careers%20-%20Thematic%20survey%20report%20%28002%29_0.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

[9] Estyn (2012) *Informed decisions: The implementation of the Careers and the World of Work framework*. Cardiff: Estyn. [Online]. Available from: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/Informed%20decisions%3A%20The%20implementation%20of%20the%20Careers%20and%20the%20World%20of%20Work%20framework%20-%20October%202012.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

[10] Articles 4, 29 and 42 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
[11] Article 2 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training
[12] Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
[13] Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

theme, these principles should be an explicit and underpinning feature of each area of learning and experience, but this is too variable in the draft documents.

Humanities clearly and explicitly connects its achievement outcomes and experience, knowledge and skills sections to the UNCRC across each of the progression steps. It will enable practitioners to embed rights as they design their local curriculum and will help them to identify links with the other areas of learning and experience.

Health and Wellbeing has a key role in helping providers to design a local curriculum and meeting the new statutory requirements of Relationships and Sexuality Education. The parity of status between physical health, emotional wellbeing and social wellbeing will support practitioners to develop a curriculum that links closely with other areas of learning and experience. The what matters statements and achievement outcomes make strong connections to the concept of rights, equality and respect. Estyn's *Healthy and Happy* report found that the best schools embed respect for human rights as part of a whole-school approach to promoting good health and wellbeing[14]. It is important, therefore, that the key messages are reflected throughout the curriculum and in teaching and learning strategies. Stronger references to human rights in the experience, knowledge and skills section, closely linked to the progression steps would help practitioners to deepen learners' experience of health, wellbeing and rights in a developmentally appropriate manner.

The importance given to learning through and about the Expressive Arts supports the principles of human rights education in the overarching draft guidance. It provides an empowering framework for practitioners to design a curriculum that broadens learners' exploration of rights, culture, identity and justice through the Expressive Arts. However, reference to the UNCRC is not always used in context and may lead to some confusion. . This section could be strengthened by presenting a strong rationale for how the arts supports the UNCRC and universal human rights, particularly in relation to the what matters statements that the arts can be a force for personal and societal change).

Languages, Literacy and Communication makes a significant contribution to delivery of human rights education. The what matters statements reflect the principles of Article 29 of the UNCRC well, incorporating provision to promote literacy, communication skills, conflict resolution skills and respect for different cultures and identity through deepening the use of languages. There is good connectivity with other areas of learning and experience, but the exploration of rights, justice and the promotion of equality could be more explicitly drawn out in the experiences, skills and knowledge' section of the 'Literature fires imagination and inspires creativity' what matters statement.

The five proficiencies set out in Mathematics and Numeracy make an implicit contribution to the promotion of human rights and human rights education. Each of these proficiencies and the what matters statements are needed in real-life human rights contexts, such as the use of statistics and graphs throughout the world to apply logical reasoning, identify patterns, communicate information and solve problems. However, links with the other areas of learning and experience do not explicitly support practitioners to embed human rights education across the curriculum. Although many practitioners will exploit such links naturally to provide authentic teaching and learning experiences, it would be helpful to further explore connections between Mathematics and Numeracy and other key concepts, such as climate change, gender equality, nutrition and physical activity.

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[14] Estyn (2019) *Healthy and Happy: School impact on pupils' health and wellbeing.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Healthy%20and%20Happy%20report%20En_0.pdf Accessed on: 12/06/2019

Science and Technology makes a strong contribution to human rights education. The 'Developing a broad and balanced curriculum' section provides clear connectivity with rights, particularly in relation to Relationships and Sexuality Education. Each of the what matters statements promote the use of scientific inquiry and understanding to connect learners to their natural and social environments; making use of design thinking and computational skills to help solve real-world problems. Human rights concepts could be more explicit in this element to promote further links between teaching and learning experiences across the curriculum, for example with Humanities and Mathematics and Numeracy.

B6: **How could the *cross-curricular frameworks (National Literacy and Numeracy Framework and the Digital Competence Framework)* be refined to support the development of literacy, numeracy and digital competence across the new curriculum?**

National Literacy and Numeracy Framework
The National Literacy and Numeracy Framework[15] provides a well-considered and useful framework for the progression of learners' literacy skills across the curriculum. This requires minimal refinement to make it fit for purpose as a tool to support the development and application of learners' literacy skills across the new areas of learning and experience. In general, it would be helpful if the oracy strand in the literacy and numeracy framework could be separated into 'listening' and 'speaking' to reflect the organisation in the area of learning and experience of 'receptive and 'productive' knowledge and skills in the 'what matters' statements. Currently, the acquisition and use of vocabulary is a 'programme of study' skill and not a 'literacy and numeracy framework' skill. As part of any revision to the literacy and numeracy framework, the important relationship between language acquisition and the development of learners' reading and writing skills across the curriculum should be considered. There should also be appropriate reference to visual and multimedia texts across all of the literacy strands of the national literacy framework to support the development and application of learners' skills in authentic contexts.

There are a very few aspects of the literacy strands in the current literacy and numeracy framework that would benefit from refinement, such as placing a greater emphasis on developing learners' phonological awareness in the reading strand. This could be achieved by including:

- 'sound and word play', and 'rhythm, rhyme and alliteration' in the revised framework as essential building blocks in the development and application of learners' early reading skills (not only their oracy skills)
- knowledge and use of 'syllables' (in addition to 'onset and rime') as reading strategies to align with the proposed achievement outcomes for Languages, Literacy and Communication at progression step 1.

In addition, we recommend the 'organising ideas and information' element in the writing strand be revisited to ensure:

- expectations for learners to revise and improve their work align with the progression in the achievement outcomes for languages, literacy and communication and the assessment proposals for peer and self-assessment

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[15] Welsh Government (2013b) *National Literacy and Numeracy Framework.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/hwb-live-storage/ce/44/26/0c/4830422ab1e6a190b11feac9/to-support-schools-in-introducing-the-national-literacy-and-numeracy-framework.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

- expectations for learners' use of information and communication technology to support their writing skills align appropriately with the digital competence framework (Welsh Government, 2018)[16].

Similarly, some minor adjustments are required in the numeracy element of the framework to ensure that all content outlined in the framework matches the corresponding progression step in the achievement outcomes of Maths and Numeracy. With the framework now being linked to progression steps rather than school years, it is important that the guidance supports secondary schools in particular to co-ordinate their planning to ensure that pupils have opportunities to consolidate and apply their numeracy skills at an appropriate level across the curriculum.

Digital Competence Framework
The Digital Competence Framework provides a useful framework for the progression of learners' digital skills across new areas of learning and experience. As this is a relatively new framework, it requires only a little refinement to make it fit for purpose as a tool to support the development and application of learners' digital skills.

An exercise to ensure that the whole framework aligns appropriately with the progression steps of the new curriculum would be beneficial. In addition, a few elements in the Data and Computational Thinking strand need clarifying, including the use of the term 'data sets' in the data and information literacy element in Year 5 and 6 (currently) may be unclear to non-specialists. References to the use of spreadsheets for Year 5 and 6 (currently) need to be clearer and the progression steps need to include creating and using formulae. In the Year 3 column the term 'analyse' is used, then in Year 4 'extract information' before returning to 'analyse' in Year 5. In Year 7 it states that learners in Year 7 should create a database or spreadsheet – this should read database and spreadsheet.

Further consideration could be given to how the curriculum guidance can help providers to ensure that all the skills outlined in the Digital Competence Framework are taught to learners systematically so that they can apply them across the curriculum. One appropriate solution would be to include the teaching of digital skills as part of the science and technology area of learning and experience. We have explored the rationale behind this suggestion in more detail in the responses to questions B5 and the section in C5 on science and technology.

B7: How well do you think the guidance for each *area of learning and experience* will support children during the Foundation Phase years?

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
		X		

Estyn welcomes the notion that the active and experiential nature of the foundation phase should be a feature of the approach to teaching and learning across the whole continuum of the curriculum from 3 to 16, where appropriate, and not only for learners between the ages of 3 and 7. However, this intention is not always communicated effectively enough through the language used in the draft guidance.

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[16] Welsh Government (2018) *Digital Competence Framework Guidance.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/hwb-live-storage/6e/7f/33/19/c3494e069deaeab755d4c156/digital-competence-framework-guidance-2018.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

When the draft guidance refers to the intended pedagogy of the foundation phase in progression steps 1 and 2, this is helpful to providers. For example, in science and technology, there is reference to 'multisensory experiential learning' and 'a rich learning environment indoors and outdoors'. This helps to set expectations of the way in which practitioners and practitioners will deliver the curriculum and focuses on the importance of hands-on approaches to learning. The balance of child-initiated and adult-led learning comes through more strongly in some areas of learning and experience than others. For example, Expressive Arts refers usefully to 'different types of play and a range of creative activities which are both child-initiated and adult led'.

However, the need for this balance is not expressed clearly enough in all areas of learning and experience. It may be useful to include an overarching section in the guidance about the expectations for delivery of the curriculum for learners from 3 to 7. Furthermore, the importance of an experiential approach to learning for all learners, where appropriate, should be more explicit. Curriculum documents should emphasise that this sort of learning should not be limited to younger pupils, but the current good practice in teaching and learning in the foundation phase should be extended and used across all ages, as appropriate.

Practitioners in non-maintained settings that provide funded early education will also be required to deliver the curriculum. Practitioners in these settings tend not to have qualified teacher status and, although they receive support from local authority advisory practitioners or a teacher from a local school, many will require a high level of support to plan their own curriculum to meet the needs of the children. It may be helpful to adapt and build on the current foundation phase profile to meet the requirements of the new curriculum. Doing this in a way that makes clear the child development milestones and the types of activities and expected learning that supports these milestones will provide beneficial support to non-maintained practitioners. For practitioners to plan their curriculum, it is important that they are supported to realise that there is a continuum of learning prior to progression step 1 and that most children will have left their settings before reaching this progression step. It would be useful if this could be made explicit in the curriculum guidance.

Across the areas of learning and experience, there is limited reference to continuous, enhanced and focused provision. In 2017, we reported that the learning environments in many primary schools were not well organised and that practitioners did not fully understand what good quality continuous, enhanced and focused provision looked like[17]. The guidance should reinforce these important aspects of foundation phase learning to ensure that practitioners and practitioners understand the range the of teaching and learning strategies that sit behind progression steps 1 and 2 in particular, and beyond, where appropriate.

B8: **How well do you think the *draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance* supports and enables learners to progress at an appropriate pace for their development in the area of learning and experience from ages 3 to 16?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
		x		

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[17] Estyn (2017a) *Active and experiential learning.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Estyn%20Active%20and%20experiential%20 0learning_E_Accessible_1.pdf Accessed on: 17/06/2019

A clear structure is in place that should help practitioners and other practitioners to enable learners to progress at an appropriate pace for their level of development. In most areas of learning and experience, the achievement outcomes in each of the progression steps are very broad, while in Mathematics and Numeracy, they are far more specific. Both models can be used to identify when a pupil is ready to move to the next progression step, but the difference in presentation may be confusing for practitioners. This difference may also bring about inconsistencies in practitioners' and providers' interpretations of the achievement outcomes. It may be useful to consider including a clear rationale to explain the different approaches, or to consider bringing them more in line with one another.

It is encouraging to note that practitioners and experts from across Wales are working to update the Routes for Learning materials as part of the wider reform of curriculum and assessment arrangements. This will hopefully address the issue that has been raised about progression step 1 not being accessible to many learners with special educational need in mainstream and special schools. It would be very helpful to all practitioners in both sectors if the Routes for Learning materials linked as closely as possible to the relevant progression steps in the new curriculum. This curriculum is intended to be an inclusive continuum of learning. Linking the documents directly would strengthen the continuum and the inclusive nature of the new curriculum, and help to encourage practitioners in all sectors to benefit from one another's expertise. As noted in the response to question B7, it is important that practitioners are supported to realise that there is a continuum of learning prior to progression step 1. Some learners with special educational needs in mainstream and in special schools may not progress beyond progression step 1. It would be useful if this could be made explicit in the curriculum guidance.

B9: **How well do you think the _draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance_ will provide a basis to help young people progress beyond the age of 16?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	x			

The draft guidance enables providers to design a curriculum that will engage and inspire learners, and has the potential to help them progress well after age 16 as the achievement outcomes across the areas of learning and experience are ambitious and challenging. The study of all areas of learning up to the age of 16 will support learners' development and enable them to demonstrate the four purposes. As a result, they will be better placed to be make confident choices and be successful in post-16 education, training or work and beyond.

As providers will need to design their own purpose-led curriculum, they will be best able to ensure that all learners can follow the most appropriate route to further programmes of study or to employment. Through delivery of their curriculum, providers should ensure that pre-16 learners are prepared for further study, through their curriculum choices and in skill development. The guidance should be strengthened to support providers to design and plan their particular curriculum. Providers should be wary of limiting the preparation for post-16 to a narrow focus on examinations pre-16.

The ability to specialise in subject areas or disciplines will be very important to many learners' future choices and development. Therefore, schools and other post 16 providers

will need to ensure that, as well as breadth of study, learners have opportunities to select from a suitable range of subject areas or disciplines at various entry points that support their future areas of study and work. Progression routes for all learners will need to be considered carefully.

It is also important to consider the breadth of pathways available to the whole range of learners from age 14 onwards, including progression to qualifications and experiences that can support the employability skills and dispositions needed for lifelong learning. The guidance should explore more fully how the post-16 sector and employers can be more widely involved in supporting the transition to further training education and employment as learners reach progression step 5.

Many of Estyn's thematic reports in recent years which have focused on the 14-19 curriculum have identified that providers need to support young people to become independent learners by developing skills that are key to success as self-reliant learners, as well as collaborating better with colleges and other providers to provide a broad and engaging curriculum. For those learners who do not go onto study A levels or progress to higher education, it is not clear in the draft guidance how the qualifications and experiences in their final two years of compulsory schooling will enable them to progress on to engaging vocational or technical pathways. Any new qualifications developed at progression step 5 need to reflect skills required by employers and involve a range of post-16 providers to ensure that there is appropriate progression routes to wider education and training. We welcome the opportunity to consider this further and in more detail in the Qualifications Wales consultation.

The period from the introduction of the new curriculum in secondary schools to the completion of the first qualifications by the first cohort of 16 year olds (2022 – 2027) provides an opportunity for the Welsh Government to join together the major reforms of Our National Mission and the Post-Compulsory Education and Training (PCET) reforms in creating the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research to discuss how to develop the qualifications, skills, experiences and dispositions needed for 16 year olds to be successful, confident learners ready for future education, training or work. This transition could be supported through close collaboration and engagement between schools, local authorities and regional consortia, PCET sectors, regulators and employers to ensure that learners finish their compulsory schooling displaying the dispositions outlined in the four purposes.

B10: Formative assessment should be given primacy in the new curriculum. How well do the assessment proposals promote this principle?

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
		X		

The guidance identifies usefully that, in order to achieve a positive and reflective attitude towards giving and receiving feedback for learning, 'it is important that settings and schools establish a strong learning culture and an environment of mutual trust and respect'. However, guidance should be clear that providers need a systematic, whole-school approach to developing these evaluation skills with learners. It would be beneficial to emphasise that this must begin early on in learners' education and continue throughout their time in education.

The guidance also identifies the benefits of practices such as peer and self-assessment. However, the importance of ensuring that formative assessment practices are a regular and valuable part of high quality teaching and learning is not clear enough. It would be helpful to emphasise that formative assessment should be an integral part of high quality learning and teaching. In too many schools, practitioners do not have a good understanding of the purpose and benefits of good formative assessment in supporting learners to identify their strengths and knowing how to improve their work. In order to achieve this, Welsh Government and middle tier organisations need to ensure that providers have access to reliable, high quality professional learning and resources that will enable them to deepen their understanding of the purposes and benefits of formative assessment.

B11: **The assessment proposals** **propose a broader approach to moderation –** *supporting professional dialogue regarding the nature of progression, the selection of appropriate learning and assessment activities, as well as ensuring a shared understanding of what achievement looks like in the context of the Achievement Outcomes.*

How would you envisage your setting /school putting this approach into practice? What further support do you think would be needed?

The guidance could better reflect some of the key moderation issues highlighted by our inspection evidence[18]. Our review identified that:

- in a minority of schools, the range of evidence used does not cover all areas sufficiently, show evidence of learners drafting or the level of teacher support in completing work.
- there is not enough focus on evaluating learners' work that is on the borderline between the current levels.

The guidance should require practitioners to consider the whole range of a learner's work, including whole workbooks and drafts, during moderation within and between providers. This would enable them to gain a more rounded view of a learner's standards. It should also make clear that all practitioners should be involved fully in moderation activities so that everyone develops a good understanding of achievement within all relevant progression steps. This will help leaders and practitioners to understand and take a more useful approach to moderation so that practitioners within and across providers come to broad agreement about what effective standards and progress look like for learners of all ages and at all progression steps.

The guidance is useful in making clear that 'Developing shared broad expectations in relation to the Achievement Outcomes articulated for the Progression Steps on the continuum of learning is a key part of the process.' It makes worthwhile reference to moderation in and across settings. Current practices often focus on a cluster of primary schools moderating learner progression with one secondary school. As a result, it is not clear how groups of secondary schools develop a consistent understanding of what progress looks like. This will be vital under the new curriculum arrangements, particularly around Progression Steps 4 and 5. Guidance should be clear that groups of secondary schools should also moderate learning to ensure accuracy and consistency of understanding of learner standards and progress.

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[18] Estyn (2016) *Moderation of teacher assessment at key stage 2 and key stage 3: a review of accuracy and consistency.* [.pdf] Available online at:

B12: **What practical issues for settings and schools do we need to be mindful of if the assessment proposals are to be made a reality?**

Our Annual Report 2017-18 identified that *"Assessment is the weakest aspect of teaching"* (p.43)[19] in secondary schools. Practitioners do not ensure that all types of assessment, whether carried out by the teacher or by learners themselves, are useful or have a positive impact on improving standards. In order to bring about the strategies set out in this assessment proposal, there needs to be a strong focus on professional learning to ensure that leaders and practitioners have a strong understanding of a wide range of formative assessment procedures and the benefits these bring.

It will be important for providers to develop policies and practices that promote effective formative assessment practices. These should set out strategies that build upon learners' skills and understanding systematically and progressively.

Welsh Government and middle tier organisations should guard against placing external pressure on providers to adopt unhelpful assessment practices, such as best-fit models or reducing learners' achievement to numbers for external accountability.

The section 'Planning for assessment' identifies importantly that in the 'early years' practitioners need to look for evidence of embedded learning in day-to-day activities. However, the message that assessing what a learner can do 'consistently and independently' should not just relate to early education. This is an important principle when assessing learners' understanding at all ages and it would be useful to recognise this.

B13: **What implications do you see from the draft Curriculum for Wales 2022 guidance for you and your colleagues' professional development needs in respect of the:**

- **impact on pedagogical practice**
- **implications of planning for a purpose-driven curriculum**
- **professional learning requirements linked to pedagogy**
- **developing in-school and cross-school collaboration**
- **specific areas of professional learning aligned to the areas of learning and experience**
- **opportunities for professional enquiry approaches support delivery of the new curriculum?**

Addressing the professional learning needs of practitioners and school leaders, including a knowledge and understanding of pedagogy, is paramount to the successful implementation of Curriculum for Wales 2022. It may be helpful if the guidance made it explicit that changing the curriculum will not on its own bring about improved pupil outcomes

Excellent teaching combines highly effective pedagogical strategies with contextualising these strategies within different subjects and areas of learning. The most effective

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https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Teacher%20assessment%20-%20Eng.pdf
Accessed on: 19/06/2019

[19] Estyn (2018b) The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2017 – 2018. [.pdf]
Available online at:
https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/ESTYN_Annual%20Report_Accessible_English__2018.pdf Accessed on: 17/06/2019

practitioners have deep subject knowledge and choose the best approach for the activity and subject. Correctly, leaders often place similar emphasis on staff learning about recent developments in their phase or subject alongside effective and evidenced pedagogical improvement strategies.

The most effective providers are those that use evidence well to inform their practice. They are external facing, regularly discuss research, and learn from best practice in their own and in other organisations. In these providers, practitioners are curious about what works best for their pupils. They think critically about pedagogy, read broadly about teaching and learning, and discuss their work with other practitioners. Staff strive to understand the "why" and the "how" of teaching as well as the "what".

As curriculum change gathers pace, it will be important for providers to[20]:

- engender a culture of enquiry and engagement
- trust their staff to make professional choices
- have an open classroom policy
- create opportunities for professional dialogue around teaching
- regularly place teaching and pedagogy as agenda items on senior leader and staff meetings
- use professional development days as strategic opportunities to explore further initiatives in teaching and learning
- create dedicated time for practitioners to take part in peer observations and action research
- use research to inform the decisions and strategy for their organisation
- have clear policies for teaching, feedback and curriculum that all staff understand and adhere to
- establish professional relationships in and beyond their region
- seek and act on expert advice.

Implications of planning for a purpose-driven curriculum
Few current practitioners are familiar with planning and developing their own curriculum. In particular they lack the skills to develop a purpose-driven curriculum, although increased competence in this will underpin the knowledge and skills that learners develop and the experience they gain.   Professional learning opportunities will be required to elevate the knowledge, skills and competence of practitioners and school leaders in planning for a purpose-driven curriculum. Practitioners should be supported to consider a range of valid and effective alternative models. They should also be enabled to develop the confidence to deliver their own curriculum, not one designed by external providers for a generic market.

Developing in-school and cross-school collaboration
Professional learning now and in the future should build on the collaborative endeavours of the providers that have participated in pioneer work so far. Estyn welcomes the development of stronger links between schools, local authorities, regional consortia and HEIs. This collaboration has the potential to support more evidence-based and effective approaches to professional learning. In particular recent developments in a range of aspects has brought closer working and developed understanding through a range of foci.

Examples include:

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[20] Estyn (2018a) *Improving teaching.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Improving%20teaching.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

- changes to initial teacher education and induction
- the development of professional standards for practitioners and teaching assistants
- the development of a National approaches to professional learning
- Schools as Learning Organisations
- National Resource for School Improvement

Specific areas of professional learning aligned to the AOLEs
Currently the models of support for specific AOLEs vary across Wales. In addition plans for the new National networks to support AOLEs are in their infancy. Effective and timely support for practitioners will be key to helping them develop their approach to each AOLE and pedagogy in general.

Welsh Government may wish to consider the professional development needs of practitioners, particularly those new to the profession and non-specialists who will be delivering the new areas of learning and experience. The needs of professionals will vary, with some requiring upskilling in subject knowledge, while others may need to reconsider their current approach to the delivery of a subject area.

Regarding Welsh, we would suggest developing a national consensus on what constitutes effective teaching and learning approaches for second and subsequent language acquisition. This should inform the national approach to professional learning for all practitioners in Wales. Improving the linguistic skills and experience of existing practitioners and new practitioners (through in-service and initial teacher education programmes), and their understanding of effective teaching and learning in languages, is key to:

- realising Wales' ambition of having one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and
- ensuring that all young people from all backgrounds understand the benefits of speaking at least one international language and have the opportunity to receive, a suitable qualification in a modern foreign language subject.

While improving practitioners' Welsh language skills and their competence to teach and use the language effectively is a priority in all English medium schools, we would suggest prioritising practitioners in secondary schools, as this is where the challenge is greatest.

Opportunities for professional enquiry approaches support delivery of the new curriculum
Professional enquiry should be used alongside a range of other approaches and is one tool in the continuum of professional learning approaches. Professional enquiry promotes learning successfully in many instances. It has the potential to build practitioner confidence and enthusiasm for working collaboratively as well as enabling participants to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills in the specific aspects on which they focus. Schools that have been involved as professional learning pioneers have already begun exploring the use of this methodology. Providers and practitioners who are new to this way of working will require support that includes tailored coaching and mentoring. In particular, providers that are used to direction and following prescribed pathways and are not confident about reimaging their curriculum will need high levels of support when developing this approach.

Overall, providers and those that work alongside them will need to build in better evaluation of the support provided. This is to ensure that the approaches adopted are

effective and result in changes that improve outcomes for learners as well as providing participants to reflect on their own practice.

In addition, providers and their partners must be agile with the support offered in order to meet the needs of leaders and practitioners at different stages of development.

B14: **What are the professional learning challenges and opportunities to enact the principles in the assessment proposals?**

Estyn's latest Annual Report[21] identifies clearly that practices linked to assessment need improvement. For example:

- In eight-in-ten (non-maintained) settings requiring monitoring by Estyn where there was a judgement on standards, children do not make good enough progress in developing their skills. This is often because practitioners do not use assessments well to identify and plan for children's next steps in learning.
- In secondary schools, 'Assessment is the weakest aspect of teaching. Practitioners do not ensure that all types of assessment, whether carried out by the teacher or by learners themselves, are useful or have a positive impact on improving standards'.

There needs to be a strong focus on professional learning to ensure that leaders and practitioners know the purpose of formative assessment and have an in-depth understanding of a wide range of formative assessment strategies and the benefits these bring.

SECTION C

C1: **If you would like to provide specific feedback relating to one or more specific areas of learning and experience, please make a selection and add your comments below.**

Expressive Arts	X	Language, Literacy and Communication	X
Health and Well-being	X	Mathematics and Numeracy	X
Humanities	X	Science and Technology	X

Comments (if you choose more than one area of learning and experience please label each comment):

Expressive Arts
Overall, the draft guidance for the Expressive Arts area of learning and experience addresses the priorities for children and young people's learning well. It provides good support for providers to plan for all learners from 3 to 16 to gain a broad range of experiences in the expressive arts. Estyn welcomes the renewed emphasis on the expressive arts and the contribution it makes to nurturing learners' creativity and sense of wellbeing within the new curriculum. The following comments seek to refine this guidance, rather than amend it significantly.

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[21] Estyn (2018b) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2017-18.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/ESTYN_Annual%20Report_Accessible_English__2018.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

The guidance clearly acknowledges the value of the arts in education in relation to the four purposes, although the importance and value of the arts is sometimes lost in dense, over-complicated text. In a few cases, the references to the value of the arts are too generic and do not relate specifically to the contribution the arts can make to children's learning and development. Overall, it would be helpful to practitioners if the language and specialist vocabulary were more precise. For example, the meaning of specialist terms, such as 'a common creative process', may be confusing. Furthermore, references to the what matters statements claim that they are not linear. It would be better to say that they do not stand alone and are not intended to be taught in isolation. The style, language and wordiness of the introduction detracts from the important information needed by practitioners to deliver this exciting and forward-thinking curriculum.

The four principles of progression provide a helpful and clear way of expressing the concept of a spiral curriculum. However, the description of progression in the arts that precedes the principles lacks clarity and might lead to misinterpretation. For instance, the phrase, 'learners may easily move backwards and forwards', might be more usefully expressed as, 'learners revisit, refine and develop their skills as they progress'.

The guidance on the role of the expressive arts in providing a broad and balanced curriculum provides a few helpful references to important cross-curricular and wider curricular responsibilities. However, overall this section presents a somewhat limited view of the value of the expressive arts as a learning medium. The examples provided do not provide sufficiently rich stimulus for practitioners to use the arts to help develop learners' skills in literacy, numeracy and digital competence. In a few cases, the examples might lead to unintended consequences or limit what providers will do to develop innovative curriculum delivery models. The section on wider skills, although useful, might benefit from more consideration about how the arts can develop the skills of critical thinking, problem-solving, planning and organisation, creativity and innovation and personal effectiveness. In this section, the references are too generic and not necessarily pertinent to the expressive arts. Particular terminology in this section sometimes obscures the intended meaning and might lead to misinterpretation. For instance, it is not clear what 'ethical creation' or the concept of Relationships and Sexuality Education being 'collective, holistic and continuous throughout the learners' education journey' actually means in practice.

The guidance provides a suitable overview of how the area of learning and experience will help learners gain an understanding of a national and global perspective of the arts. However, in a few cases, the examples provide a narrow view of Welsh culture and heritage. The bullets refer to a strong musical heritage but do not consider well enough the artistic, dramatic and dance heritage in Wales or reference to the recent growth in film and media in Wales. Furthermore, the description of learners as 'artists born in Wales' does not capture the multicultural nature of providers in Wales where a considerable proportion of learners are not born in Wales.

The Expressive Arts guidance identifies appropriate opportunities for learners to develop their understanding of relationships and sexuality education. However, the reference to the UNCRC is not necessarily used in context in this section and might lead to some confusion. In many ways, this section could be strengthened by presenting a strong rationale for how the arts supports the UNCRC and universal human rights through the what matters statement that 'the arts can be a force for personal and societal change'. At present, it is not clear how this links to relationships and sexuality education. In addition, it is not clear whether the information under the sub-headings are examples or specific guidance.

The information in the section on putting the area of learning and experience into practice provides important information for providers and practitioners, and should influence the successful delivery of the curriculum. However, this section would benefit from further consideration of how this information can be best used to support practitioners, particularly non-specialists, to deliver the curriculum. At present, the approaches are not expressed clearly enough and might drive the wrong behaviours in providers. For example, the section refers to an integrated approach to 'the teaching of a combination of art, dance, drama, film and digital media and music in one lesson and that all the disciplines can be taught in one lesson by one person. This implies that this is the only or best way to deliver an integrated arts curriculum and could unduly influence practice. Furthermore, the paragraph on an interdisciplinary approach lacks clarity. This section might benefit from the inclusion of basic principles of curriculum design in the arts or examples of how the arts curriculum might be designed and delivered.

Within the what matters sections, the achievement outcomes capture the broad expectations of progression. They provide useful prompts to help providers and practitioners structure effective learning activities for learners. The concepts of increasing complexity, control, depth and independence are evident in the progression steps.

Achievement outcomes, in the main, are clearly expressed but could be improved if the following points are considered:

- Ensure a greater consistency of language across and in the what matters, achievement outcomes, and experience, knowledge and skills.
- Ensure an appropriate and consistent balance between generic knowledge, skills and experience and discipline-specific knowledge, skills and experience
- Include a 'stem' at the start of each progression step that identifies each discipline by name. This would avoid repetition and communicate to providers that there must be coverage of each discipline in the Expressive Arts

The language of the achievement outcomes broadly reflect the principles of progression. For example, by progression step 5, it is clear that learners are expected to work independently and undertake research and analysis. The progression steps enable learners to develop important creative skills and the achievement outcomes helpfully point to the type of learning activity required to support learners to make progress. To support this, the information on experience, knowledge and skills provide broadly helpful pointers to the content of the curriculum.

The what matters statements reflect aspects of the arts that are widely accepted as central to the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in the expressive arts. However, it might be worth considering whether the inclusion of reference to skills in the what matters on exploration might not strengthen this statement.

The sections on elements and forms in experiences, knowledge and skills are not clear and do not represent the content of specific disciplines accurately enough. Similarly, the progression of 'form' might restrict opportunities for learners. Furthermore, the sections on elements and forms appear at the start of each progression step. This detracts from the valuable information contained in experience, knowledge and skills.

The sections on planning for learning and links with other areas of learning and experience in each what matters do not provide sufficiently useful information. A few statements are misleading or provide contrived examples. They are presented as lists which might be perceived as being definitive. This information might be better presented

in examples of curriculum models or examples of how these support specific achievement outcomes.

In a few instances, achievement outcomes do not always seem to be in the same order in the progression steps. The order of the achievement outcomes might benefit from reorganisation to ensure that common skills, knowledge and understanding flow sequentially through the progression steps.

Health and Well-being
The what matters statements for Health and Wellbeing provide comprehensive coverage of all important aspects of health and wellbeing. The progression steps are appropriate. The achievement outcomes for each step correspond well with the age when learners may typically reach them. Overall, the amount of detail is balanced enough to provide entitlements for learners and sufficient direction for providers without being too prescriptive.

The achievement outcomes at progression step 5 set a clear ambition for where learners in Wales will typically be at age 16 in order to support them through adolescence and prepare them for adult life. Given the universal nature of health and wellbeing, it is critically important that learning experiences in Health and Wellbeing continue for all learners between the ages of 14 and 16, irrespective of any choices they make at 14, and irrespective of the progression step they have reached at age 14.

Secondary schools often do not currently give enough time at Key Stage 4 to health and wellbeing, through the current curriculum areas of physical education (PE) and personal and social education (PSE). Our recent Healthy and Happy thematic report found that:

> 'No secondary school schedules all pupils to have around two hours of PE per week. Schools commonly provide around two hours of PE for pupils in Year 7, but this often reduces for pupils in Year 8 or Year 9. In Key Stage 4, it is very common for pupils to only have an hour at most of PE per week, except for the small proportion of pupils who choose to study for a related qualification and therefore receive substantially more activity time.'

and that

> 'A few secondary schools use qualifications to accredit pupils' learning in personal and social education. However, learning in these schools often becomes focused on completing tasks associated with the qualification, and lessons are less likely to feature engaging and meaningful learning experiences about important health and wellbeing issues. In these schools, the pressure for pupils to gain accreditation for learning has unhelpfully superseded the intrinsic value of good learning experiences'

It would be helpful for Welsh Government to consider how best to modify curriculum guidance to encourage providers to ensure that all learners from 3 to 16 have sufficient opportunities to take part in structured, vigorous physical activities. Guidance should also emphasise that learning experiences in health and wellbeing should be meaningful at all ages and that their value should not be compromised by any pressure to gain a related qualification between ages 14 and 16. When planning such activities, providers should take account of our findings.

Humanities
The guidance for the Humanities area of learning and experience has brought together a wide range of traditional subject areas. It provides the flexibility for providers to develop a

curriculum that can be delivered in a subject-specific, multidisciplinary or integrated way. However, the use of specialist terms throughout the document may limit its accessibility to non-specialist practitioners.   For example, phrases such as 'engagement with philosophical questions' from progression step 2 in what matter 1, and 'consideration of ultimate questions' from progression step 2 in what matter 2 are unnecessarily complex. Their meaning, particularly for non-specialists, is not clear and may discourage some practitioners from engaging fully with these concepts. More consideration should be given to the use of specialist terms throughout the guidance. This would support linkages between the areas of learning and experience and, in particular, would benefit the delivery of cross-curricular responsibilities.

Estyn welcomes the strong position of the Welsh dimension and international perspective within the humanities, which is clearly stated in the introduction to this area of learning and experience.
Humanities will provide opportunities for all learners to learn about their heritage and sense of place through a study of their cynefin and of Wales. It will promote an understanding of how the people of Wales, its communities, culture, landscape, resources and industries interrelate with the rest of the world. Promoting an understanding of the ethnic and cultural diversity within Wales will also help learners appreciate the extent to which it is part of a wider international community. Consequently, Humanities will help learners see how their personal story is part of a wider picture of the past and present.

The humanities offer many opportunities to develop an understanding of and have authentic experiences relating to Welsh culture, business, history and geography. References to Wales and the wider world are clearly identified in the rationales, progression steps and planning for learning sections of this area of learning and experience. This clearly indicates to teachers where these cross-cutting themes can be addressed within a relevant and meaningful context for pupils. This will enable pupils to appreciate what it means to be Welsh within their setting as well as the position of Wales within an international perspective.

Estyn will be producing a thematic report in 2020, considering the current approaches to the teaching of Welsh history and culture. The findings of this report will be useful in supporting teachers and local consortia as they begin to plan for the new humanities curriculum.

Estyn welcomes the emphasis that is placed on experiences in this area of learning and experience. In Estyn's thematic report, Good practice in the humanities thematic report (2017) we noted that:

'Pupils enjoy the wide variety of activities practitioners provide and the opportunity to learn outside the classroom'.
The progression steps for learning are generally suitable and should ensure that learning experiences in the humanities are progressive and challenging. However, it is not clear from the document what contribution Humanities would be expected to make to the cross-curricular responsibilities and cros-cutting themes, especially the digital competence framework.

In the printed version of the curriculum, the 'learning' comes before the 'experiences, knowledge and skills'. It is worth considering if this might appear to place the emphasis on accountability and outcomes rather than on the learners' experience of the curriculum.

Welsh Government will need to consider the professional development needs for practitioners, particularly those new to the profession and those non-specialists who will be delivering the new Humanities curriculum. The needs of professionals will vary, with

some needing to improve their subject knowledge, while others may need to reconsider their current approach to the delivery of this area of learning and experience and the disciplines within it.

Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC)

Estyn welcomes the integration of Welsh, English and international languages in one AOLE. We agree with the principle of curriculum development, which empowers providers to design a flexible, local curriculum for their learners. However, it is very important to have broad agreement across the education profession about which teaching and learning approaches are the most effective for learners of Welsh in an English-medium provider, and which are most effective for learning international languages.

Estyn has published a number of reports on the standards and progress of language, literacy and communication in the curriculum. Our inspection evidence shows that:

- Most Foundation Phase learners to make appropriate progress in developing their Welsh language skills in English-medium settings and school but there are important shortcomings in Key Stage 2 provision
- Pupils' transition from primary to secondary schools leads to a further decline in their progress
- Planning for everyday use of Welsh and modern foreign languages in English-medium requires improvements.
- Standards of Welsh in a majority of bilingual secondary schools do not ensure that learners make suitable progress from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4[22].

This signals the significant challenge ahead for primary and secondary schools to improve the knowledge, skills and confidence of practitioners to develop learners' fluency in the target language and to ensure all learners make good progress as they move through school.

Consideration needs to be given to strengthening the guidance for languages, literacy and communication to help practitioners and providers address these shortcomings. The 'planning for learning' sections in the guidance should reflect broad, agreed approaches to teaching and learning for languages. This would help leaders and practitioners to develop a whole-school approach that addresses variability in the quality of language learning experiences.

The guidance should give emphasis to:

- the three skills of listening, speaking and reading in the early years of learning additional languages (i.e. the primary phase, Year 7 and Year 8),
- writing as a supporting skill to be developed in greater depth in the following years, when learners have a solid grasp of the 'music' of the language.

This approach mirrors language learning in a first/home language. The underlying philosophy should be that learners develop 'oral fluency' in Welsh and in international languages. An overemphasis on 'writing', and particularly the teaching of grammar, can be the unintended consequence of the demands of examinations upon the curriculum for languages, where these dictate many of the activities which learners undertake In terms of

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[22] Estyn (2018d) *Welsh in key stages 2 and 3 in Welsh-medium and bilingual schools*. [.pdf] Available online at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Welsh%20in%20key%20stage%202%20and%20key%20stage%203%20in%20Welsh-medium%20or%20bilingual%20schools%20En.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

a modern global economy, Wales needs citizens who can speak and understand Welsh and other languages confidently. Providers should place a renewed focus on learning Welsh primarily as a means of communication, particularly oral communication and understanding. We feel this should apply to international languages as well.

The approaches to teaching and learning should develop to meet the age and stage of the language learner as they move through the primary and secondary phases. They should provide opportunities for learners to revisit and extend previous language and structures as they move along the continuum of learning. There can be an abrupt shift from oracy-based-learning at the primary phase to explicit instruction at secondary phase, which does not harmonise the content or teaching and learning approaches between the phases. This can affect learners' motivation and the continuous development of language proficiency[23]. Schools will need to work together closely to ensure linguistic progression from one phase of education to the next.

As change gathers pace towards the new curriculum, it will be important to consider how it can support initial teacher education partnerships to recruit student practitioners, particularly in the primary phase, with Welsh language or international language study in their background, and with home or community languages.

Mathematics and Numeracy

The what matters statements for Mathematics and Numeracy are worded clearly and include headlines that make them easily recognisable to practitioners. However, the four purposes are not explicit enough in the rationale of the what matters. It would be useful to consider how these links could be improved. Overall, the overview section to Mathematics and Numeracy brings mathematics to life, but practitioners may be discouraged from reading it, given its length and that some sections are generic to all areas of learning and experience.

The "How mathematics supports the four purposes" section helpfully outlines the importance of developing learners' skills in Mathematics and Numeracy. The section that introduces the five proficiencies emphasises their importance in Mathematics and Numeracy. The example provided is very helpful, but the guidance would benefit from further examples in each of the progression steps that would help to develop a broad understanding amongst practitioners of the centrality of the proficiencies. It would be worth introducing the concept of the five mathematical proficiencies earlier on in the area of learning and experience, possibly referring to them within or alongside the what matters statements so that practitioners appreciate their importance in planning for learning.

Links between the planning for learning and achievement outcomes are clear. These provide practitioners and leaders with a useful framework for planning the curriculum in their provider. Estyn welcomes the increased emphasis on teaching mathematics for understanding and the importance of placing pupil progression, rather than content coverage, at the heart of planning, teaching and learning. The guidance will also help providers to focus more closely on developing learners' reasoning and problem solving-skills and ensuring that they have a deeper understanding of key concepts. Practitioners will generally welcome this, along with the carefully-considered progression steps that provide a good level of challenge for all learners.

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[23] Jaekel et. al (2017). 'From Early Starters to Late Finishers? A Longitudinal Study of Early Foreign Language Learning in School'. *A Journal of Research in Language Studies.* 67(3).

The headline planning for learning statements provide practitioners with a helpful framework at each progression step to encourage them to use a range of activities, resources and a blend of approaches to meet the specific needs of their learners in their context, without being too prescriptive. This encourages professional autonomy. However, a few of the planning for learning statements are not strong enough to emphasise the rich and varied experiences that learners should receive. It would be useful for this section to cite a few more examples in the text or as a separate support document. It might also be helpful to clarify and expand on the planning section phrase 'through a broad range of experience' at progression steps 4 & 5.

The 'I can' achievement outcomes provide learners with relevant opportunities to self-assess with careful consideration of their intended purpose. The 'I have' statements will help ensure that practitioners understand the importance of planning engaging and authentic experiences for all learners. The guidance links the wider skills and key links and interdependencies appropriately, but it is worth considering how this section could be strengthened to help practitioners to make the most of these links.

The guidance for Mathematics and Numeracy has been written to attempt to influence teaching. However, as progression in mathematics is content-based, it will be very easy for practitioners and leaders to turn this curriculum into a list of topics to cover. Practitioners may attempt to simply adapt their current schemes of work to fit the new Mathematics and Numeracy area of learning and experience. It is vital to consider how the guidance can be strengthened to help practitioners to evaluate and improve their current practice, adapting it to meet the expectations of the new curriculum. For example, the guidance does not currently emphasise well enough the benefits of using concrete, visual and abstract representations in progression steps 4 and 5.

This area of learning and experience contains many examples of overly complex technical terms. Simplifying the language would make the area of learning and experience more accessible to non-specialists, without reducing its rigour. Occasionally, the wording of achievement outcomes is unclear and this could lead to misinterpretation. For example, in progression step 3, the achievement outcome for algebra that relates to solving equations does not make it clear that learners do not need to be taught formal algebra at this progression step. It would be helpful if the guidance was more explicit.

Science and Technology

The set of six what matters statements emphasise clearly the concepts and skills learners should develop. This provides a sound basis for science and technology curriculum development. The accompanying 'get to know' section provides useful context and explains the rationale behind the structure of the area of learning and experience suitably. Within science and technology, the four purposes are represented as part of each what matters statement in a considered way. There is appropriate emphasis on individual purposes where they align well with important concepts in a what matters statement. Holistically, this leads to good coverage of the four purposes.

Overall, the achievement outcomes form a valuable route-map of learner progression. This progression is coherent and clear and should help learners maintain good momentum in their learning during the transition from primary to secondary education. The use of technical terminology increases appropriately at later progression steps, ensuring suitably accessible achievement outcomes for non-specialist practitioners and practitioners and important detail for secondary subject specialists. Knowledge has an appropriately prominent presence alongside skills as part of the achievement outcomes and planning for learning. Achievement outcomes and planning for learning sections are suitable for lesson planning for learners with moderate learning needs. Overall, the planning for

learning sections provide useful additional guidance for practitioners. However, they appear less well considered than the achievement outcomes. They include specific points, but these do not form an exhaustive list, with a few equally valid points on knowledge, skills and experiences omitted.

The links between what matters statements and areas of learning and experience are adequately specified under the planning for learning tab. However, room remains in the 'relationships between what matters statement' section to emphasise the importance of these links when curriculum planning. The expectation for integration of, or synergy between, learning experiences derived from different what matters statements and areas of learning and experience should be strengthened. Without this, some practitioners may interpret the statements as referring to purely biology, chemistry, physics, design technology, and computing and try to minimise any changes to current practice.

The guidance provides valuable freedom for providers and practitioners to innovate, taking into account their local contexts and learners' individual needs. However, the science and technology area of learning and experience includes a high volume of knowledge derived from a relatively high number of traditional subjects. There is a risk that providers, particularly secondary schools, may interpret the curriculum as a steer to compress this large area of learning into one sixth of teaching time, and allocate to it only one sixth of curriculum leadership resources.

Science and technology includes a range of worthwhile opportunities for learners to develop their literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills. However, these opportunities are not explicit and the links to the digital competence framework and the literacy and numeracy framework are not clear. This may be deliberate, and is potentially appropriate because professional learning must ensure that these opportunities are recognised and capitalised upon. We are aware that the achievement outcomes for the computation what matters statement are currently being amended. Our responses to B5 and B6 which include a concern that this what matters statement as it currently stands does not link to, and provide an equivalent foundation for the digital competence framework as is provided to the literacy and numeracy framework by Mathematics and Numeracy and Languages, Literacy and Communication areas f learning and experience respectively.

Any aspects of the Science and Technology area of learning and experience that remain statutory until the age of 16 should be highlighted. In light of the large number of traditional subjects involved, it is important to consider how qualification choices will be affected. Some learners may want to specialise highly in this area of learning and experience and less so in another. Other learners may want to specialise in specific aspects of science and technology, but not other aspects of science or technology. The size and diversity of this area of learning and experience means that this would arguably be appropriate for some learners.

C2: **How well do the Progression Steps in the *Mathematics and Numeracy Area of Learning and Experience* articulate the proficiencies illustrated in the principles of progression?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	X			

The section on the proficiencies is clear and emphasises their importance in Mathematics and Numeracy. The example given in the overview section is useful, but providing practitioners with further similar examples in each of the progression steps is required. It is important to emphasise throughout the mathematics and numeracy area of learning and experience that the proficiencies are an integral part of all what matters, in order to help practitioners when planning teaching and learning.

One limitation in the online presentation format means that the proficiencies tab can be closed completely. This means that practitioners may consider these quickly and then opt to not see them again, rather than making them a central feature of their planning. The proficiencies need to be prominent throughout the Mathematics and Numeracy section of the curriculum.

C3:   How well do the learning sections in the *Languages, Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience* provide for learners to develop translanguaging skills?

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
		X		

The introduction to the Languages, Literacy and Communication section of the draft curriculum gives a clear steer that learners' understanding of languages needs to be developed. This will enable learners to understand the links between languages and to use transferable skills in learning languages. This aligns well with Welsh Government's ambition of having one million Welsh speakers by 2050. It supports the curriculum's four purposes and the need to change the outlook for the Welsh language and international languages in Wales.

To further improve the document, it would be helpful if the rationale for, **'**Learning about identify and culture through languages prepares us to be citizens of Wales and the world' included a statement about how this what matters statement will support learners to move comfortably between different languages as the situation requires. It is important to emphasise in the supporting narrative that languages is a subject area through which learners can work creatively and gain much enjoyment, when teaching and learning is effective.

In general, reference to home or community languages throughout the languages, literacy and communication section of the curriculum is too variable. Currently, the document does not present a clear enough rationale as to why learners' home or community languages are important to theirs and other learners' learning and experiences. As a high-level curriculum document, the 'Learning' and 'Planning for Learning' sections should reflect these principles and signal opportunities for learners to use and develop their plurilingual skills across the what matters in the context of home or community languages.

Overall, the progression steps address the development of learners' translanguaging skills appropriately. Progression step 2 would benefit from a qualifying statement to enhance the understanding of progression between achievement outcomes. For example, 'appropriate to my stage of language learning' could be added to the statement 'I can use translanguaging skills in Welsh and English and, where applicable, home/community languages'. It might be useful to continue the home or community language examples in progression step 2 (see point above), rather than listing examples of modern foreign

languages exclusively, which might lead to a misunderstanding that providers must introduce an international language at progression step 2 as a 'new' language (although leaving providers free to do so should they wish).

Currently, the learning sections do not reflect as clearly as they could that when learners learn more than one language, their development will not be at an equal rate of progress across the languages, nor will they develop their receptive and productive skills in that language equally. However, they can still move between languages with different levels of knowledge and skill acquisition. For example, a learner of French at progression step 3 may be more confident in listening and reading, than in speaking and writing, when compared with a learner of Welsh who will have started their learning early in the Foundation Phase. In addition, it would be helpful if the experiences, knowledge and skills section to emphasise the importance of focussing on opportunities for learners to hear, read/see and speak languages in the earlier progression steps, rather than writing, particularly when learning additional languages, and that these emphasise translanguaging in speaking, reading and listening contexts.

We recognise the ambition in the experiences, knowledge and skills, for example 'Learners need to be able to appreciate, recognise and understand different accents, dialects and idiolect' (from progression step 1). However, this subject-specific terminology and what this means in practice is likely to be of concern for non-specialist practitioners. Therefore, professional learning and resources must be matched to this ambition. It will be essential for staff in all school settings to feel confident in their knowledge of linguistic skills and approaches to learning and teaching, which are age-appropriate, if Wales is to meet the expectations set out in languages, literacy and communication. We recommend professional learning for all school-based staff should build upon the firm foundation of the work undertaken by the Global Futures Steering Group and link to existing regional networks, for example current regional consortia initiatives and UK-wide projects assisted by The Open University.

C4: **How well does the guidance in the *Languages Literacy and Communication Area of Learning and Experience* provide for the development of language acquisition and learning?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	X			

The draft guidance focuses successfully on the relevant elements of language learning, its wider purposes and its benefits to learners and society. The development of the differentiated achievement outcomes, based on a continuum of progression in languages, provides a strong framework for providers to distinguish between teaching approaches and to apply those that are most appropriate for learners' language development needs in and across the progression routes.

The what matters link listening with reading and speaking with writing helpfully. This organisation supports the development of similar competencies in each of the language skills, for example 'developing inference as receptive skills' in listening and reading, or 'developing the ability to speak and write for different audiences' as productive skills.

The study of languages contributes new experiences to a learners' developing knowledge of Wales and the world, and of other cultures. It provides purposeful contexts for the

development of language acquisition and learning. This supports achievement of the four purposes effectively and is reflected well in the what matters, 'Learning about identify and culture through languages prepares us to be citizens of Wales and the world'.
The what matters, 'Learners who speak and write effectively are prepared to play a full life in life and work', focuses too strongly on grammatical issues in writing in the international languages progression route. We suggest this is refined to ensure there is sufficient emphasis on developing learners' confidence and ability to speak a language with a good level of fluency. It should also support learners' creative use of language, even if the learner makes grammatical mistakes as they explore writing creative texts in an additional language.

We agree with the approach to use the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, *no* date)[24] as a reference tool when designing the progression routes. The CEFR is based on robust international evidence of linguistic progression for learning additional languages. The Languages, Literacy and Communication section of the draft curriculum guidance presents a commitment to increasing the status of languages in the curriculum and the progression route for international languages is broad enough to cover a wide range of languages.

To further improve the document, we suggest consideration might be given to refining the wording of the achievement outcomes for receptive and productive skills of international languages and Welsh in English-medium settings/schools/streams, so that there is better 'read across' between these progression routes. This will provide better support for practitioners, particularly those who are not specialists in additional language teaching. It may be that achievement outcomes in Welsh in English-medium settings/schools/streams at progression steps 3 and 4, would be included in later progression steps for international languages to reflect that it will be a matter for providers to determine whether, and to what extent, to teach international languages and to what age range of learners. However, wherever possible, the language used should be consistent across the progression routes. This will support practitioners and learners to make the connections and to make planning for learning in languages a more manageable and effective process.

In the section 'Progression in this area of learning and experience', the guidance states, 'Achievement outcomes for international languages show progression from progression step 3.' Nevertheless, very broad achievement outcomes for progression steps 1 and 2 are provided. However, currently, these statements are too broad to be useful to practitioners and consequently, this route does not reflect well enough early language acquisition and development in international languages. We suggest the achievement outcomes for progression steps 1 and 2 should be fleshed out and relate to each what matters statement. They should provide support or guidance to plan learning and teaching for the specific skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing, and to be used as a basis to monitor how learners are progressing towards progression step 3. This would better meet the proposals set out in the White Paper[25]:

Overall, the achievement outcomes for the progression steps for Welsh in an English Medium setting reflect the progression in language acquisition and development better than in the international languages route. In addition, statements of similar skills are not expressed as clearly in the international languages progression route as in the Welsh in an English-medium setting route.

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[24] Council of Europe (*2001*) *Common European Framework of Reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://rm.coe.int/1680459f97 Accessed on: 19/06/2019
[25] Welsh Government (2019) *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum, Proposals for a new legislative framework.* [.pdf] Available online at: https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-02/consultation-document-transformational-curriculum-v2.pdf Accessed on: 19/06/2019

Currently, the achievement outcomes for international languages in progression steps 1 to 3 do not reflect well enough the supporting narrative for 'Literature fires imagination and inspires creativity'. These should mirror the progression for Welsh in English-medium settings/schools/streams more closely to ensure the opportunity to provide rich contexts for learning international languages are not missed. We would welcome the opportunity to have further discussion with Welsh Government about the achievement outcomes for international languages and we offer our support for any further work on these.

In general, throughout the Achievement Outcomes for Welsh/English and Welsh in English-medium settings/schools/streams, there is too much emphasis on '**mutations'**. It is our view that this aspect of language should be treated in the same way as other aspects of grammar in English, Welsh and international languages, and this should not be referenced explicitly in the document.

Vocabulary development is essential at all stages of learning. The document makes appropriate reference to this in 'Listening', 'Speaking' and 'Writing' from progression step 1 in the experiences, knowledge and skills, for example:
    (Listening) Learners need to experience:
- rich language environments
- language models from a variety of speakers
- ambitious vocabulary and idiomatic language to enhance language choices

    (Speaking) Learners need to experience:
- rich language environments…
- language models in a range of contexts and situations

    (Writing) Learners need to experience:
- an increasing variety of context-specific and subject-specific vocabulary
- opportunities to explore and use a variety of ambitious and appropriate vocabulary

However, the planning for learning section does not include the critical link between vocabulary development and the development of learners' reading skills. Estyn's planned thematic activity for 2020-2021 will include a report on how well primary schools help learners to acquire language and extend their vocabulary to support the development of their reading and writing skills. We would recommend that the 'reading' section of the experiences, knowledge and skills is refined to include appropriate references to support learners' reading development.

C5: **How well does the *Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience* guidance support a whole-school approach to supporting health and well-being?**

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well at all
	X			

The inclusion of Health and Well-being as one of the six areas of learning and experience supports schools to take a whole-school approach to supporting pupils' health and wellbeing. Estyn welcomes this development and supports the important messages conveyed throughout the area of learning and experience about the vital role of nurturing learners' health and wellbeing throughout their education and beyond.

Page 19 of the health and wellbeing area of learning and experience document outlines briefly the need for a whole-school approach. This is somewhat tucked away in the guidance and could usefully be more prominent, given how important this message is.

This section could be strengthened by including key messages from Estyn's thematic report 'Healthy and happy: school impact on health and wellbeing' (June 2019). This report noted that schools with an inclusive whole-school approach to supporting learners' health and wellbeing aim to make sure that the everyday school experience of learners is consistent with messages given about health and wellbeing in the curriculum. In addition to a broad and balanced curriculum, that includes discrete, evidence-based learning experiences that promote health and wellbeing, these schools also have:

- policies and practices that ensure learners make good progress in their learning
- leaders who 'walk the talk' about supporting learners' health and wellbeing
- a nurturing culture, where positive relationships enable learners to thrive
- an inclusive community and ethos
- detailed knowledge about learners' health and wellbeing that influences policies and actions and policy
- environment and facilities that promote good health and wellbeing, such as space to play, socialise and relax at break times
- supportive pastoral care and targeted interventions for learners that need additional support
- effective links with external agencies
- close partnerships with parents and carers
- continuing professional learning for all staff that enables them to support learners' health and wellbeing

It may be useful to refer to Estyn's report, which was not available when this consultation was launched.

The guidance could also be strengthened by including links to the various other relevant statutory and non-statutory guidance documents that relate to health and wellbeing, that refer directly to the curriculum and learning experiences or other aspects of a whole-school approach. These links could usefully be hyperlinks on the web version of the guidance, and could include the following, for example:

- [Guidance for substance misuse education](#) (Welsh Government, 2013a)
- [Sex and relationships education in schools](#) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010b)
- [The Future of the Sex and Relationships Education Curriculum in Wales: Recommendations of the Sex and Relationships Education Expert Panel](#) (Welsh Government, 2017b)
- [Nurture groups: a handbook for schools](#) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2010a)
- [Healthy eating in maintained schools](#) (Welsh Government, 2014)
- [Access to free drinking water](#) (Welsh Government, 2016a)
- [School toilets: Good practice guidance for schools in Wales](#) (Welsh Government, 2012)
- [Welsh network of healthy schools scheme](#) (Public Health Wales, 2018)
- [SchoolBeat](#) (the police All-Wales School Liaison Core Programme) (Welsh Government, 2011b)
- [School Nursing Framework for Wales](#) (Welsh Government and NHS Wales, 2017)
- [Supporting learners with healthcare needs](#) (Welsh Government, 2017a)
- [Statutory guidance to Welsh local authorities on the provision of independent counselling services](#) (Welsh Government, 2013b)

- [In-reach to schools programme](#) (NHS Wales, 2018)
- [Inclusion and pupil support](#) (Welsh Government, 2015b)
- [Respecting others: Anti-bullying overview](#) (Welsh Government, 2011a)
- [Respect and resilience: Developing community cohesion](#) (Welsh Government, 2016c)
- [School Councils (Wales) Regulations 2005](#) (National Assembly for Wales, 2005)

Is there anything else you would like to add or feedback on?

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