



Estyn

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Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

Welsh-medium and bilingual provision for 14-19 learners

May 2008



BUDDSODDWR MEWN POBL
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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- ▲ pupil referral units;
- ▲ independent schools;
- ▲ further education;
- ▲ adult community-based learning;
- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ youth and community work training;
- ▲ LAs;
- ▲ teacher education and training;
- ▲ work-based learning;
- ▲ careers companies;
- ▲ offender learning; and
- ▲ the education, guidance and training elements of The Department for Work and Pensions funded training programmes.

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- ▲ provides advice on quality and standards in education and training in Wales to the National Assembly for Wales and others; and
- ▲ makes public good practice based on inspection evidence.

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Introduction

- 1 The purpose of this report is to provide advice to the Welsh Assembly Government in response to a request in the annual remit to Estyn. The subject of advice is the range and quality of Welsh-medium provision for 14-19 year old learners, including the availability and use of Welsh-medium qualifications.
- 2 The report is intended as a discussion paper rather than a full review. It notes examples of good practice and describes what is needed to realise the aspirations of the Learning Pathways 14-19 in relation to Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.
- 3 The report is based on a review of the provision in secondary schools, further education colleges and workplace training providers. The evidence is derived from:
 - visits to a sample of providers¹ in the three sectors during the autumn term 2007;
 - Estyn reports on individual providers who were inspected during 2005-2006 and 2006-2007;
 - inspection-related data; and
 - the development plans of local 14-19 networks² for 2007-2008.

¹ A list of the providers visited is given in the Appendix.

² A '14-19 network' is a group with strategic responsibility that represents education and training providers within a local authority area.

Background

- 4 The Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to transform the provision for 14-19 year old learners in Wales, was outlined in the policy document '*The Learning Country: delivering the promise*' (2006). The Welsh Assembly Government's wants to see:

'95% of young people, by the age of 25, ready for high skilled employment...or higher education by 2015.'

The Learning Country: delivering the promise' (2006) page 13

- 5 This document also notes the aim:

'to work with examination boards to extend the range of qualifications, particularly vocational qualifications, through the medium of Welsh'

The Learning Country: delivering the promise' (2006), page 12

- 6 *Iaith Pawb*³ notes the need for a full range of qualifications through the medium of Welsh, and acknowledges the all-important role of education through the medium of Welsh in the process of developing robust bilingual skills amongst learners.

- 7 In order to achieve these aims, '*Learning Pathways 14-19: guidance II*' calls for more flexible and balanced methods of providing education for 14-19 year old learners, with a wider range of curricular experiences which will meet the varying needs of young people in Wales. In terms of Welsh-medium provision, this guidance states that⁴:

'Learning Pathways 14-19 will contribute to the aims of Iaith Pawb by seeking to:

- *offer provision in the language of choice wherever possible;*
- *place an emphasis on developing young people's bilingual skills; and*
- *equip young people with skills in Welsh and English which will enable them to learn and work within a bilingual society.'*

- 8 This document also notes that a range of general and applied subject and course choices, from entry level to level 4 for 14-19 year old learners, should be made available as an entitlement, and that it will be necessary, in particular, to consider how to increase the provision through the medium of Welsh in every area of Wales.

- 9 The Welsh Assembly Government's guidance on the revenue allocation for the 14-19 networks in 2008-2009 specifies that an additional sum of £1.2m has been earmarked for the development of Welsh-medium or bilingual vocational provision. Bids are expected to focus primarily on level 2 and 3 courses in the Welsh Assembly

³ '*Iaith Pawb*' is the Welsh Assembly Government's action plan for a bilingual Wales.

⁴ '*Learning Pathways 14-19: guidance II*' (WAG 2006) page 12

government's priority areas⁵ or other local priorities. This funding will be allocated on a regional basis rather than to each network partnership, in order to promote collaboration across networks. It is a condition of funding that provision that is Welsh or bilingual leads to assessment through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, and regions are required to contact awarding bodies to discuss the availability of Welsh-medium or bilingual assessment.

- 10 The independent review of further education in Wales, '*Promise and Performance*', (Webb Review) was published in December 2007. This report notes specifies the following requirements in relation to post-14 Welsh-medium provision:
- learners' entitlement in terms of Welsh or bilingual provision;
 - provision which promotes the culture of Wales and is able to provide a range of services in the areas of education, health and care through the medium of Welsh; and
 - career and employment opportunities for young people.
- 11 In 2006, Estyn published the report '*Current qualifications and the 14-19 Learning Pathways initiative*'⁶. In this report, it is noted that the majority of GCSE and Advanced level qualifications are available in Welsh as well as in English. Also, since 1995, it has been possible to complete some vocational qualifications entirely through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. The report also notes that the number of Welsh-medium vocational qualifications is increasing. However, the report comes to the overall conclusion that the range of Welsh-medium vocational courses being offered is limited and that only a small number of learners pursue them.

⁵ The Welsh Assembly Government's six priority areas are: childcare and the early years; agriculture and land-based studies; leisure and tourism; business administration and IT; and media studies and the performing arts.

⁶ This report can be found on Estyn's website at http://www.estyn.gov.uk/publications/Remit_17__14to19_Learning_pathways_2005_2006.pdf

Main findings

Qualifications available through the medium of Welsh

- 12 The vast majority of general qualifications are available in Welsh. Around 60 additional applied or vocational qualifications have become available in Welsh as a result of the Welsh Assembly Government initiative that offers support to awarding bodies to help them deliver this service. However, the number of vocational qualifications available in Welsh is a very small proportion of what is available in English. The shortage of examiners and verifiers who have the expertise to work through the medium of Welsh is a barrier to extending the number of Welsh-medium qualifications.

Courses offered by providers through the medium of Welsh

- 13 Overall, between 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, there was an increase of 13% in the number of Welsh-medium and bilingual courses offered by providers across Wales. The increase, over the same period, in the number of Welsh-medium vocational courses offered by providers in the Welsh Assembly Government's six priority areas was 7% overall, though the rate of increase varied a lot between individual priority areas.
- 14 There is considerable variation between authorities in the number of Welsh-medium courses offered by providers, even among authorities serving areas of similar linguistic background. In general, learners in many parts of Wales do not have enough opportunities after leaving school to continue their learning in Welsh.
- 15 Often, providers and learners do not have complete information about the qualifications that are available in Welsh nor the demand for them from employers.
- 16 The lack of a complete picture of the range and take up of Welsh-medium or bilingual courses offered to 14-19 learners makes it difficult to identify baselines and to set local and national targets.
- 17 More and more secondary schools, colleges and training providers are promoting bilingualism and increasing opportunities for learners to come into contact with Welsh and improve their bilingual skills. However, there are important shortcomings in bilingual provision in almost half the secondary schools and over half the training providers inspected in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007. Of the eight further education colleges that we inspected during this period, almost all of them are making good progress, in some instances from a low base, in promoting bilingualism.

Learners who take courses through the medium of Welsh

- 18 In 2004-2005, 10% of sixth-form learning activities were in Welsh, while a further 7% were bilingual. These figures represent a significant increase on the figures for 2003-2004. In contrast, only 2% of learning activities in further education and workplace training combined were undertaken in Welsh or bilingually in 2004-2005. In further education, the percentage of Welsh-medium only learning activities is less than 0.5%.

- 19 Between 2004 and 2006, there has been a broadly upward trend in the number of Welsh-medium entries for GCSE, entry level, A and AS level external examinations. However, there was considerable variation in 2006 in the proportion of Welsh-medium entries between authorities that have the highest percentage of the population who speak Welsh. In some providers, significant numbers of learners follow their courses in Welsh or bilingually but undertake the final assessments in English.
- 20 Although the range of Welsh-medium resources is improving, the shortage of materials such as textbooks is still a barrier to increasing the number of learners who choose to pursue their courses through the medium of Welsh. Providers are often not aware of what is currently available and where to find it.

Collaboration between providers in extending Welsh-medium options

- 21 More extensive collaboration between providers results in the introduction of new courses, particularly in vocational areas. In general, progress is slow in terms of developing new provision which depends on collaboration between further education, training providers and schools, but there is greater collaboration between schools and progress is better.
- 22 Where pupil numbers are low, too little consideration has been given to employing peripatetic teachers or using video conferencing to make Welsh-medium or bilingual sessions more accessible to learners, especially where providers are far apart.

The impact of 14-19 networks in extending Welsh-medium options

- 23 In a number of cases, 14-19 networks have helped providers to introduce new Welsh-medium courses, especially in vocational areas. However, generally, strategic planning by networks has shortcomings in planning Welsh-medium provision, and in auditing provision and identifying gaps. The development plans of many local 14-19 networks fell short of the Welsh Assembly Government's expectation of the 2007-2008 bids that at least 10% of their budget should be allocated to extending Welsh-medium provision.

Sabbatical scheme

- 24 The 'sabbatical scheme'⁷ has begun to increase the numbers of Welsh-speaking teachers and lecturers who teach in Welsh or bilingually. However, the number of further education lecturers who participate is considerably lower than what was anticipated when the scheme was introduced.

Bilingual champions in further-education colleges

- 25 Bilingual champions are working well to develop colleges' capacity to extend their Welsh-medium or bilingual provision by identifying and addressing staff training needs.

⁷ The 'sabbatical scheme' is a programme funded by the Welsh Assembly Government to increase the number of qualified teachers and lecturers who teach in Welsh. The scheme is offered free of charge and travelling and supply costs are reimbursed. The first course was held in spring 2006. The scheme has now been extended for the period up to 2009.

Bilingual teaching

- 26 An increasing number of providers are introducing bilingual teaching as a means of extending what they can offer in Welsh at least in part. Effective bilingual teaching is a considerable challenge and, in general, there is too much variation in its quality.

Recommendations

27 In order to expand the provision for 14-19 learners who want to follow courses through the medium of Welsh,

the Welsh Assembly Government should:

- R1 identify baseline data and set targets for 14-19 networks to increase Welsh-medium provision and monitor progress against those targets;
- R2 promote new Welsh-medium online resources and raise providers' awareness of what is currently available;
- R3 make sure that the sabbatical scheme meets the needs of teachers and their employers by extending it to cater for people with a wider range of competence in Welsh; and
- R4 continue to increase the number of Welsh-medium qualifications;

the 14-19 networks should:

- R5 identify gaps and weaknesses in Welsh language provision across providers and set targets to address them;
- R6 audit the linguistic skills of local staff and set targets to increase the numbers teaching in Welsh and encourage more to take advantage of the sabbatical scheme; and
- R7 inform providers and learners about qualifications that are available in Welsh; and

providers should:

- R8 market their Welsh-medium and bilingual courses more actively;
- R9 evaluate the cost-effectiveness of courses, and collaborate more to provide Welsh-medium courses jointly with other providers when numbers are low, for instance, by extending the use of peripatetic teachers;
- R10 increase tutor support for learners undertaking distance learning courses through video-conferencing or e-learning;
- R11 increase the number of Welsh-medium courses on offer to learners, particularly in the Welsh Assembly Government's six priority areas; and
- R12 improve bilingual teaching so that learners can participate fully in learning activities in Welsh when in bilingual classes.

Qualifications available through the medium of Welsh⁸

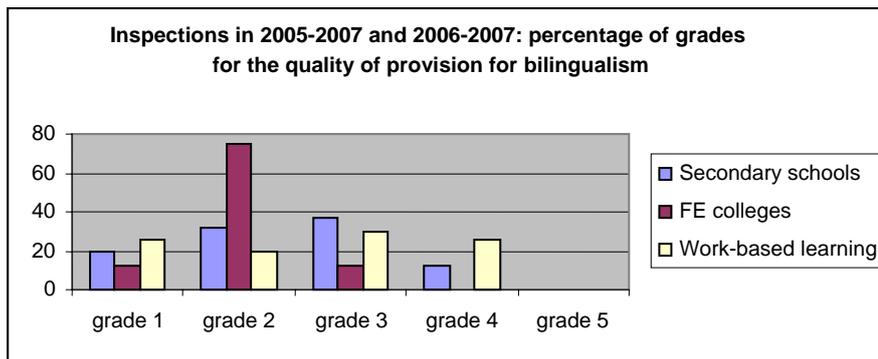
- 28 At present, the Welsh Assembly Government is collecting information from awarding bodies on the qualifications that are currently available through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.
- 29 The vast majority of the general GCSE, Advanced Level and Advanced Supplementary Level subjects are available in Welsh. The WJEC awarding body has been prominent in providing in-service training and resources for teachers Welsh-medium or bilingual learning.
- 30 A Welsh-medium awarding body forum was established in 2004 in order to increase the vocational qualifications available in Welsh. By now, the fifth funding cycle is in underway, and around 60 additional vocational qualifications have become available through the medium of Welsh following the support given to the seven awarding bodies who are part of the scheme. However, this is only a very small proportion of the total number of vocational qualifications that are available in English. For example, there are no qualifications available in Welsh in areas in which there is a strong service element, such as customer care, health and safety and justice, as well as in areas such as car repairs and sales, and transport. There is currently no requirement that an awarding body should ensure that a new qualification introduced in Wales is available in Welsh as well as in English. However, there are a number of practical difficulties in introducing this as a requirement.
- 31 The shortage of examiners and verifiers who have the expertise to work through the medium of Welsh is a barrier to extending the number of Welsh-medium qualifications. The development and support costs for Welsh-medium provision can be high because of the small number of learners involved. Providers are not always aware of the qualifications that are currently available in Welsh. There is also a lack of information for providers and learners about the demand for specific qualifications from employers.

⁸ The figures that are quoted are taken from the following statistical summaries produced by the Welsh Assembly Government: '*Bilingual statistics for the Post-16 learning sector in Wales*'; '*SDR 53/2007: Further Education, Work-based Learning and Community Learning in Wales, 2005/06*'; and '*Learning network analysis 2005-06*'.

Courses offered by providers through the medium of Welsh

- 32 Publications like the Welsh Assembly Government's '*Bilingual statistics for the Post-16 learning sector in Wales*' provide useful baseline information about the number of learning activities in school sixth forms, in further education and work-based learning providers. However, it is difficult to get a complete picture of the range of Welsh-medium or bilingual courses offered to learners, together with the take-up, across the 14-19 age range, either at a national or a local level. This makes it difficult to identify baselines and set local and national targets.
- 33 From 2003-2004 to 2004-2005, there was an increase of 13%, from 626 to 705, in the total number of courses through the medium of Welsh across all providers in Wales. The largest increase during this period was seen in Gwynedd and Anglesey, where there was an increase in the number of courses in excess of 50% in 2004-2005. There was also a significant increase in Rhondda Cynon Taff, but a reduction in Carmarthenshire and Powys. In 2004-2005, there were no Welsh-medium courses in the Merthyr, Vale of Glamorgan or Newport and fewer than 10 courses in total in Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Bridgend. In Merthyr Tydfil, although secondary education through the medium of Welsh is provided in a neighbouring authority, the fact that there are no 14-19 courses through the medium of Welsh means a lack of progression and continuity in Welsh provision for learners who are returning to their local area for further education or work-based training from outside the area.
- 34 There is considerable variation in terms of what is offered by providers, even between authorities who serve areas that have similar linguistic features. For example, in 2004-2005, there was a total of 87 Welsh-medium or bilingual courses in Carmarthenshire compared with 62 in Ceredigion. In 2004-2005, there were more subjects available through the medium of Welsh in Flintshire than in Conwy and Denbighshire where there are more Welsh speakers. Variations such as these mean a lack of equal opportunities for post-16 learners who have been educated previously through the medium of Welsh.
- 35 Between 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, there was a significant increase in the number of institutions that were providing Welsh-medium courses in subjects such as design and technology, drama, further mathematics, sociology and psychology. Far fewer providers offer Welsh-medium courses in language, mathematics and science than in subjects such as music, history and geography. In 2004-2005, only a small number of providers (12 or fewer) had Welsh-medium provision in areas in which the demand for bilingual skills was likely to be higher, such as information and communication technology, economics, home economics and media studies.
- 36 There was an increase from 334 to 359 (7%) from 2003-2004 to 2004-2005, in the total number of Welsh-medium vocational courses in the Welsh Assembly Government's six priority areas. However, there is variation between individual priority areas. The learning area of care and early years saw an increase of around 40% in the number of courses during this period, and there was a small increase in business and administration and in tourism and leisure. However, there was a reduction in ICT of around 15% during this period, and a lesser reduction in media and the performing arts and in agriculture. In media and the performing arts, there were only 13 Welsh-medium courses in 2004-2005.

- 37 In schools where there are Welsh-medium and English-medium streams, opportunities to continue to study through the medium of Welsh often diminish in key stage 4 and diminish further in the sixth form. This is because there are not enough teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh or there are not enough learners to make up classes of a viable size. In these instances, not enough consideration has been given to addressing these difficulties, by working in partnership with other providers or teaching bilingually.
- 38 When we inspect individual providers as part of the six-year cycle of inspections, we award grades for the quality of the provision in promoting learners' bilingualism. The following chart shows the grades given to providers in the three sectors during 2005-2006 and 2006-2007.



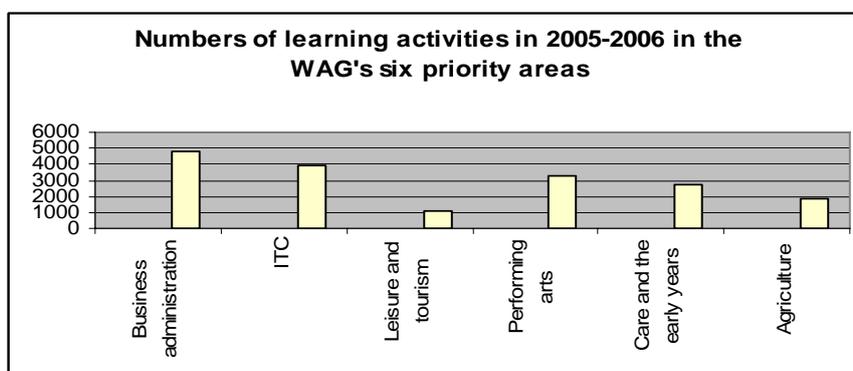
- 39 These figures are based on inspections in Welsh-medium and English-medium sectors, and take account of what is reasonable to expect in relation to the linguistic nature of providers and that of the areas they serve. An increasing number of providers are giving more attention than previously to promoting learners' bilingualism. However, the chart shows that there are shortcomings in the provision for bilingualism in nearly half of the secondary schools and over half of the training providers.
- 40 The picture relating to further education colleges in the chart above is based on the eight providers we inspected during this period. More colleges are now beginning to promote a general ethos that reflects Wales as a bilingual country, for example in the use of bilingual signs and notices. A small number of further education colleges have made significant efforts to improve their provision for Welsh-medium learning, and others are showing early signs of catering for Welsh-medium learners. However, in general, learners in most areas of Wales do not have sufficient opportunities when they leave school to continue with their education either through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. In some instances where provision is available, providers often do not make enough effort to show learners the advantages of following courses in Welsh or bilingually.
- 41 As the curriculum expands to provide a better choice of Welsh-medium vocational courses for learners, the costs of provision often increase. The main reason for that is the small numbers of learners involved. Many of the new vocational courses which have been introduced recently are dependent on funding received through local networks. This is short-term funding and there is much uncertainty about the sustainability of courses after that date. Many providers, especially schools, do not do enough to measure cost-effectiveness and consider other means of provision where costs of delivering a course are high.

- 42 The Welsh Assembly Government's commissioning programme for developing resources for vocational areas has improved the availability of Welsh-medium materials. Canolfan Sgiliaith and initiatives such as the National Grid for Learning (NGfL-Cymru), the Rhannu project (Dysg/Welsh Assembly Government) and local provision such as the Gwynedd and Anglesey e-learning centre, contribute much in terms of increasing and sharing available Welsh-medium learning resources. However, learners and staff in post-16 providers continue to identify a lack of Welsh-medium learning resources for vocational courses as being one of the obstacles to increasing the number of learners who opt to pursue their courses through the medium of Welsh. Providers are often not aware of the extent of what is currently available and where to find it.

Learners who take courses through the medium of Welsh⁹

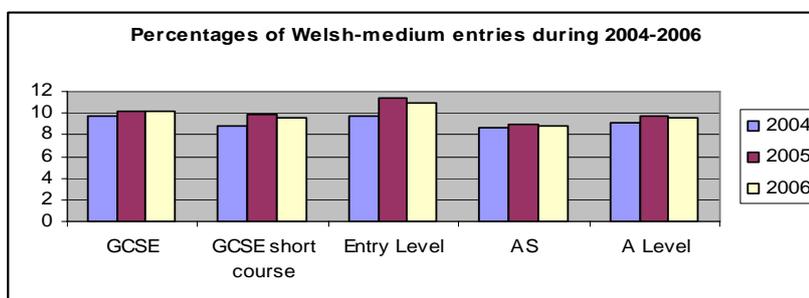
The number of learners who take courses through the medium of Welsh

- 43 In 2004-2005, 10% of sixth form learning activities¹⁰ were undertaken through the medium of Welsh in secondary schools and 7% bilingually. These figures represent a significant increase of around 30% on the figures for 2003-2004. There was a small increase in the work-based training sector. However, in 2004-2005, only 2% of the combined total of learning activities in the further education and work-based learning sectors were through the medium of Welsh or bilingual. In 2005-2006, 4% of learning activities were undertaken in Welsh or bilingually in further education colleges, which represents a significant increase on previous years. The percentage of Welsh-medium only learning activities in further education continues to be less than 0.5%.
- 44 In 2005-2006, the number of learning activities on vocational courses throughout Wales varied greatly amongst the Welsh Assembly Government's six priority areas.



The number of learners who undertake their final assessments through the medium of Welsh

- 45 Between 2004 and 2006, there has been a broadly upward trend in the number of Welsh-medium entries for GCSE, Entry level, Advanced and AS level external examinations. Although the figures for 2005 are almost all slightly lower than the 2006 figures, they are higher than those of 2004.



⁹ The statistics that are quoted in this section are taken from a statistical summary produced by the Welsh Assembly Government 'Bilingual statistics for the Post-16 learning sector in Wales' and from data provided by the Welsh Joint Education Education Committee's (WJEC) Wales Education Database (WED).

¹⁰ The number of 'learning activities' means the total number of courses offered by providers multiplied by the number of learners who pursue them.

- 46 The chart shows that the percentage of Welsh-medium GCSE entries increased from 9.69% in 2004 to 10.03% in 2006. This increase is reflected in the figures for Welsh-medium GCSE short courses. However, the figures for Welsh-medium entries in 2006 continue to be lower than expected when taking into account that 15.4% of 11-16 year-old secondary pupils followed the Welsh first language programme of study in 2006. The percentage of entries for entry level examinations through the medium of Welsh was also higher in 2006 than in 2004. The percentage of Welsh-medium entries for the A level and AS level examinations increased from 8.86% in 2004 to 9.14% in 2006.
- 47 The following table shows the percentage of Welsh-medium assessments in 2006 in six authorities. These are the authorities that have the highest percentage of Welsh speakers according to the 2001 Census.

	Percentage of all persons over 3 year of age who speak Welsh	Percentage of 15 year olds who speak Welsh	Percentage of entries for the GCSE Welsh first language examination in 2006 ^{11 12}	Percentage of final GCSE assessments through the medium of Welsh in 2006 ¹³
Anglesey	60.1	80.0	69	28
Gwynedd	69.0	90.2	80	52
Conwy	29.4	51.2	18	12
Denbighshire	26.4	45.5	25	12
Ceredigion	52.0	81.9	59	15
Carmarthenshire	50.3	61.0	30	18
Wales	20.8	42.8		

Source: 2001 Census figures and WJEC statistics

- 48 We have to be careful when considering the figures in the second column, because the category does not necessarily represent the number of 15 year-olds who could cope with the linguistic demands of following courses through the medium of Welsh. However, it is reasonable to expect that there would be a better match between the figures in the last two columns. When taking this into account, there is much variation between authorities in the proportion of Welsh-medium assessments, even between authorities with similar levels of entry for the GCSE Welsh first-language examination. The figures for Anglesey and Denbighshire, and especially in Ceredigion, are low. In 2006, the figures for all other Welsh authorities were below 10%, with the exception of Rhondda Cynon Taff (18 %) and Wrexham (10%).

¹¹ As a percentage of all pupils who sat a GCSE examination in either Welsh first language or Welsh second language

¹² These figures have been rounded.

¹³ These figures have been rounded.

- 49 The variation in the number of Welsh-medium entries is also evident when looking at individual subjects. These are the figures for 2006 for a sample of GCSE subjects in the same six authorities.

	Geography	History	Religious studies	ICT	Business studies	Mathematics	Double science
Anglesey	28	35	46	0.4	17	39	36
Gwynedd	65	85	89	58	53	66	65
Conwy	12	13	40	0	16	13	12
Denbighshire	15	15	9	18	14	12	12
Ceredigion	39	35	43	14	25	10	22
Carmarthenshire	18	20	17	16	24	11	6

Source: WJEC statistics

- 50 The chart shows that there is much variation in the percentage of Welsh-medium entries in individual subjects across authorities and also between subjects within the same authority. In Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire, the figures for the core subjects of mathematics and science are much lower than for history, geography and religious studies. The figures are very low in ICT in Anglesey and Conwy, and in double science in Carmarthenshire.
- 51 In some instances, low levels of Welsh-medium entries are a result of learners following their course in Welsh or bilingually, but undertaking the final assessment in English. Where providers have clear policies and expectations, learners who pursue their courses through the medium of Welsh are also assessed in Welsh. This is especially the case in designated Welsh-medium schools in the south-east of Wales. Often in schools in which there is bilingual provision or streamed Welsh and English provision, many learners who pursue their course through the medium of Welsh not only do the final assessment in English but also complete written tasks as part of their course in English. This is often because the learners themselves choose the medium of writing and final assessments.
- 52 The fact that learners switch to English in their written work and the final assessments can mean that learners do not achieve their full potential in terms of subject knowledge and understanding. This is because the medium of recording and writing is different from the main medium of teaching. This can also lead to a lack of confidence in Welsh-medium contexts, particularly in vocational areas, because learners are not having the opportunity to develop a full range of communication skills in Welsh.

Collaboration between providers in extending Welsh-medium options

- 53 Collaboration between providers is essential in order to extend Welsh-medium provision in a cost-effective way. This is especially so in the Welsh-medium sector, particularly in the case of providers who serve areas where the population is scattered and there are long distances between providers.
- 54 Providers work in partnership to provide courses by doing one or more of the following:
- arranging for learners to travel to classes in another provider;
 - employing peripatetic teachers;
 - using video-conferencing equipment; and
 - making use of online learning resources.
- 55 There are examples of more extensive collaboration between providers, especially between secondary schools, as a means of extending Welsh-medium provision, particularly in vocational areas, as described in the following case study.

Case study 1

Context

'*Partneriaeth 6*' is an initiative involving two secondary schools in neighbouring authorities in south-east Wales, Ysgol Gwynllyw in Pontypool and Ysgol Cwm Rhymni in Bargoed.

Strategy and action

The purpose of the initiative is to extend the vocational curriculum that both schools offer in the sixth form. This is a good example of a flexible approach to partnership, involving a combination of methods of delivery that includes the use of a peripatetic teachers, video-conferencing and students travelling to the other school. A notable feature of the support for learners is the presence of a tutor from learners' base school in distance learning lessons. The schools have trained members of their own staff to act as internal and external verifiers for BTEC courses because of the awarding body's difficulty in finding verifiers who are able to work through the medium of Welsh.

Outcomes

The schools are able to offer an increasing range of courses, particularly in the vocational field, representing reduced delivery costs and increased efficiency. These include an NVQ learning assistants' course, BTEC courses in tourism and travel, health studies, business, construction and hospitality, and A and AS level law.

- 56 Often, learners do not like to travel to another provider in order to follow a course, and this can have a detrimental effect on their levels of commitment and motivation. By September 2007, 29 secondary schools had received financial support from the Welsh Assembly Government to upgrade video-conferencing equipment, which has enabled them to offer increased options in collaboration with other providers. However, some problems are being encountered with this method of delivery. Sometimes, the total weekly contact time is considerably less than the usual four to five hours per week for advanced level courses, with learners in some instances receiving as little as a one-hour distance-learning lesson without any additional support. There is evidence to suggest that this can have a significant negative effect on the results of final assessments.
- 57 A strong element of competition between providers in the different sectors exists in many areas, and this impairs the range of options offered to learners. Yet, there are some instances in which the traditional boundaries between sectors are being crossed, as the following examples show:

Case study 2

Coleg Menai provides part-time vocational courses for about 400 14-16 year-old learners from schools in Anglesey and Arfon.

Coleg Sir Gâr refers learners who want to follow Welsh First Language at A and AS levels to Ysgol Y Strade, Llanelli, rather than providing the course in the college in direct competition.

Coleg Glan Hafren, Ysgol Glantaf and Ysgol Plasmawr in Cardiff collaborate in the delivery of BTEC music technology. Both schools provide the theory elements through the medium of Welsh and the college is responsible for the practical element in English.

Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen and Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle in Gwynedd collaborate with the training provider Hyfforddiant Gwynedd to offer a level 1 NVQ course in building skills.

- 58 In general, progress is slow in terms of developing new provision which is dependent on collaboration between the further education, training and schools sectors. It is difficult for some schools to extend their provision, in particular in the vocational area, without collaborating with providers in these sectors. Often, a lack of Welsh-medium provision in further education colleges is a stumbling block in terms of providing a more extensive menu for learners in the Welsh language sector. Another obstacle in relation to 14-16 year old learners is that colleges cannot claim a financial allocation for learners of that age, and the cost to schools in these situations is higher as a result.

- 59 The following case study describes an innovative project involving two local secondary schools in south-east Wales:

Case study 3

Context

The schools involved are a designated Welsh-medium school, Ysgol Gwynllyw and a neighbouring English-medium school, St Alban's RC High School, both in Pontypool.

Strategy

The aim of this initiative is to increase increasing opportunities for pupils in the English school who are learning Welsh as a second language to come into contact with Welsh beyond their Welsh lessons.

Action

Students in the English school who are studying Welsh as a second language in the sixth form visit the theatre with sixth formers from the Welsh-medium school. Also, groups of approximately 20 to 30 sixth form students visit each other's school in order to socialise through the medium of Welsh.

Outcomes

This innovative scheme:

- improves the ability of students in the English school to use Welsh in a range of situations;
- raises their awareness that Welsh is a living language and a means of everyday communication; and
- strengthens Welsh-medium school students' awareness of a Welsh identity.

The impact of 14-19 networks in extending Welsh-medium options

- 60 In a number of cases, 14-19 networks have helped providers to introduce new Welsh-medium courses, especially in vocational areas. As a result, in many areas, learners have a better choice than they had previously in terms of the range of Welsh-medium or bilingual courses.
- 61 Most of the local networks' development plans give at least some attention to developing either Welsh-medium or bilingual provision. The 2006-2007 options menus in four of the networks include full details of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision, with 14 other networks including some information. There are no Welsh-medium or bilingual options in the choices offered by Bridgend, Monmouth, Newport and Merthyr. In these authorities, although there are no secondary schools that provide Welsh-medium education, insufficient consideration has been given to provision for learners who return to the authority and wish to continue to receive Welsh-medium provision after leaving school when attending a college or a local training provider.
- 62 The Welsh Assembly Government's expectation was that the 2007-2008 local network development plans should allocate at least 10% of their funding to extend Welsh-medium provision. Many plans fell well short of this. In some cases, Welsh-medium providers in the network are unaware of this requirement and do not know what proportion of the network's funding is being spent on Welsh-medium or bilingual provision. Only around a third of the networks had taken advantage of the opportunity to apply for further funding that was available for bilingual vocational courses in 2007-2008. In general, the networks have had only a limited impact in terms of extending Welsh-medium provision in the further education and training sectors. Much of what has been achieved has been as a result of the vision and aspirations of individual providers.
- 63 Only a small number of networks have undertaken an audit of the opportunities to study through the medium of Welsh in order to identify where gaps exist. In most cases, there has been but limited progress in rationalising Welsh-medium provision in order to avoid duplication and to ensure improved efficiency in terms of class sizes. In general, there is not enough strategic planning in terms of mapping, identifying gaps and objectives and setting targets. The Carmarthenshire 14-19 development plan is an example of good practice in this respect. It includes an audit of the existing provision and gaps, and makes a commitment to increasing the vocational provision by 15% annually, together with an increase of 15% by 2010 in the numbers of learners following bilingual courses.

The sabbatical scheme¹⁴

- 64 The shortage of teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh is one of the main obstacles to providing more Welsh-medium and bilingual courses. For example, in 2004-2005 only 5% of further education staff were teaching through the medium of Welsh. The publication '*Schools in Wales General Statistics 2005-2006*' indicates that around 12% of secondary school teachers teach through the medium of Welsh. It also notes that as many as 440 (full-time equivalent) secondary school teachers are competent to teach through the medium of Welsh but do not do so. Furthermore, the *LE Wales* report on planning for Welsh-medium initial teacher training¹⁵ identifies that all trainees who follow their initial teacher training course through the medium of Welsh do not go on to teach in the Welsh-medium sector.
- 65 To date, 99 teachers and lecturers have completed the sabbatical scheme course successfully, either in Bangor or Cardiff. This includes 66 primary and secondary school teachers, 32 further education lecturers and one work-based training lecturer. Enrolments for the Bangor course have been far lower than what was anticipated and so has the response from further education providers. Plans to introduce a third centre, at a location in mid Wales, were abandoned due to budget cuts for 2008-2009.
- 66 The opportunity to follow the course through distance learning has provided increased flexibility to help providers to release staff to attend. However, this option focuses on improving writing skills in Welsh and it is dependent on a high level of oral competence. In some colleges, a number of staff are learning Welsh on courses that colleges themselves run. The sabbatical scheme is not suitable for many of these Welsh learners because of its high level of linguistic demand.
- 67 Follow-up support for staff who have been part of the scheme helps to maintain and build on participants' competence in Welsh. The following case study describes the comprehensive package of support that one further education college provides to help staff to improve their competence in Welsh and teach bilingually:

¹⁴ The 'sabbatical scheme' is a programme funded by the Welsh Assembly Government to increase the number of qualified teachers and lecturers who teach in Welsh. The scheme is offered free of charge and travelling and supply costs are reimbursed. The first course was held in spring 2006. The scheme has now been extended for the period up to 2009.

¹⁵ '*A review of the statistical issues underlying Welsh medium initial teacher training intake planning*' (March 2007)

Case study 4

Context

Coleg Menai is a further education college that serves learners in Anglesey and the Arfon region in Gwynedd. A number of staff at the college have participated in the sabbatical scheme.

Strategy

The college has a comprehensive strategy for developing staff skills in Welsh. A considerable amount of effort and resources has been invested in increasing bilingual teaching and producing bilingual resources. The college has a bilingualism development plan for the period 2005-2008. This sets out quantitative targets in relation to bilingual teaching on an individual course level. Progress against these targets is monitored annually.

Action

Training for staff on matters relating to bilingualism is undertaken on a faculty basis. This includes guidance on bilingual teaching methodology and on giving feedback in Welsh to students when marking assignments. The college has a workshop for preparing and sharing bilingual learning resources and awards prizes annually to students for achievements in bilingualism.

The college provides support for staff to improve their speaking skills in Welsh, including pairing staff and holding a conversation club for staff in order to increase their confidence in speaking Welsh at both the Bangor and Llangefni sites.

One item in every management team meeting is dealt with solely through the medium of Welsh. As preparation for this, staff who need support receive a vocabulary of key words beforehand by email, and have a preliminary meeting to practise discussing the item in Welsh.

Outcomes

Coleg Menai has made considerable progress in extending the opportunities for learners to follow courses in Welsh through the bilingual delivery of courses. The proportion of staff who speak Welsh has been increased over recent years to 75%. There is increasing use of Welsh in management team meetings.

Bilingual champions in further education colleges

- 68 An increasing number of further education colleges now have co-ordinators for developing aspects of bilingual provision. Three further education colleges, namely Carmarthenshire, Llysfasi and Llandrillo, are part of a 'bilingual champions' pilot scheme that has been funded from March 2006 to August 2008 by the Welsh Assembly Government. This has now been extended to August 2009. The Welsh Assembly Government has set specific targets for institutions participating in the scheme, which includes a quantitative target to increase the number of learners who follow their course through the medium of Welsh. Providers are required to report every two months to the Welsh Assembly Government on progress and to prepare a summative annual report on the basis of progress against targets.
- 69 The bilingual champions are working successfully to develop a strategy to respond to the requirements of the project. Amongst the activities are:
- auditing lecturers' bilingual skills;
 - providing training sessions for staff;
 - holding awareness-raising sessions on matters which relate to the Welsh language; and
 - promoting the Cwricwlwm Cymreig.
- 70 Activities such as these are a good starting point to extending Welsh-medium provision.

Bilingual teaching

- 71 An increasing number of providers are introducing bilingual teaching as a means of extending what they are able to offer through the medium of Welsh. This enables them to ensure viable class sizes because there will be more students in a bilingual class than a class where the medium of delivery is Welsh only. This method of delivery also has the advantage of supporting learners who are pursuing the course bilingually to familiarise themselves with specialist and subject terms in both languages.
- 72 Effective bilingual teaching is a considerable challenge for teachers and lecturers. This is because the linguistic abilities of learners can vary considerably, thus requiring considerable flexibility and expertise in the use of both languages. In the best practice, teachers plan and prepare effectively to maximise the opportunities for learners to engage in a full range of learning activities both in Welsh and English.
- 73 However, in general, there is considerable variation in the quality of bilingual teaching. Where bilingual teaching is not effective, planning and classroom organisation is often not flexible enough to cater for the needs of both Welsh-medium and English-medium learners. In these instances, a bilingual presentation by the teacher may be followed by learners contributing mostly in English in whole class discussions and especially in small groups. As a result, there is a lack of continuity in the medium of learning and this can have an adverse effect on learners' ability to improve their range of skills in Welsh.
- 74 Introducing bilingual provision is an important step forward in cases where there is no existing Welsh-medium provision, especially where the number of learners who want to follow a course in Welsh is small. However, this should not be at the expense of expanding the number of classes where Welsh is the only medium of teaching.

Appendix: List of providers visited

- 1 Ysgol Gwynllyw
- 2 Ysgol Cwm Rhymni
- 3 Ysgol Rhydywaun
- 4 Ysgol Bro Myrddin
- 5 Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones
- 6 Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen
- 7 Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle
- 8 Ysgol Uwchradd Aberaeron
- 9 Ysgol Uwchradd Llanbedr Pont Steffan
- 10 Brecon High School
- 11 Ysgol Dyffryn Conwy
- 12 Coleg Menai
- 13 Coleg Sir Gâr
- 14 Coleg Ceredigion
- 15 Coleg Llysfasi
- 16 Hyfforddiant Gwynedd
- 17 North Wales Training