



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

## **Response to the Estyn thematic review on Welsh-medium and bilingual teaching and learning in further education**

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.



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WG31842

**Report title:**

Welsh-medium and bilingual teaching and learning in further education

**Report details:**

The report was commissioned by the Welsh Language Division, Education and Public Services Group to inform Welsh Government on the following:

- examine how effectively further education colleges ensure continuity and progression in learning experiences through the medium of Welsh and bilingually;
- evaluate the effectiveness of curricular models and teaching methods that are in place in further education colleges;
- identify and share good practice in Welsh-medium and bilingual teaching.

**Summary of main findings:**

The report recognises that there has been a small increase in the number of Welsh-medium and bilingual learning activities in further education colleges, but too few Welsh-speaking learners continue with their education through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. Where lessons are delivered in Welsh or bilingually most of the teaching is good and learners have mainly good oral Welsh language and bilingual skills. However too many learners choose not to submit assignments in Welsh.

In a minority of colleges, senior leaders have a strong vision regarding promoting the Welsh language and in expanding Welsh-medium or bilingual provision, and in these cases strategic plans include targets and strategies to improve provision. The shortage of Welsh speaking staff continues to be a significant obstacle but more can be done to develop the bilingual skills of staff.

The Welsh Government's Sabbatical Scheme and Sgiliaith's grant funded training have ensured good support for teachers.

**Recommendations for Further Education Colleges:****Recommendation 1**

Work more effectively with secondary schools to identify Welsh-speaking learners before they transfer to college and ensure that learners have all the information about support that they need in order to allow them to choose to continue their learning in Welsh.

**Recommendation 2:**

Strengthen Welsh language strategic plans to increase the number of learners who learn in Welsh or bilingually, particularly in the occupational areas for which there is an increasing demand by employers for bilingual skills.

**Recommendation 3:**

Ensure that there are sufficient staff available in each college to provide courses in Welsh or bilingually and to support staff who wish to learn Welsh or improve their Welsh.

**Recommendation 4:**

Improve staff training on the methodology of teaching bilingually and ensure that there are sufficient resources and learning materials for Welsh-medium or bilingual courses.

**Recommendation 5:**

Ensure that information about learners' language ability, prior qualifications in Welsh and learning activities are correctly recorded on the Lifelong Learning Wales Record

**Welsh Government response**

These recommendations are for further education colleges and we agree with their content. Colleges will be encouraged to develop robust Welsh language strategic plans so they will be able to plan their Welsh-medium and bilingual provision effectively allowing young people to continue with their education and training through the medium of Welsh. Colleges have an important role to play in maintaining and developing learner's Welsh language skills in line with the Welsh Government's target to achieve a million Welsh language speakers by 2050. We will circulate the report to the further education colleges and make them aware of the recommendations.

**Recommendations for Welsh Government****Recommendation 6:**

Help colleges to improve the quality of Welsh language strategic plans, including the use of data to set challenging targets to increase the number of learners who follow their courses in Welsh or bilingually.

**Welsh Government Response:**

Welsh Government agrees in principle with the recommendation and will provide guidance through the annual post 16 planning and funding cycle undertaken by colleges, and will be able to put in place data monitoring milestones to ensure that data input is improved. However it is not Welsh Government's responsibility to improve the quality of the strategic plans, these are further education institutions' documents that Welsh Government can only advise on their content and quality. We will work with college networks to encourage the sharing of good practice in planning and target setting.

**Recommendation 7:**

Conduct regular reviews of the progress made by colleges against the targets in their strategic plans.

**Recommendation 8:**

Improve data collection fields, and their associated guidance, to ensure that colleges record accurate information about learners' linguistic abilities and the language of learning and assessment by activity.

**Recommendation 9:**

Develop a national strategy to raise learners' awareness of the advantages of choosing to continue to learn in Welsh when they transfer from school to

college.

**Recommendation 10:**

Ensure that there are sufficient resources and learning materials for Welsh-medium or bilingual courses.

**Welsh Government Response to Recommendations 7-10:**

The Welsh Government accepts these recommendations.

Planning meetings are held with colleges to discuss future plans and monitor performance during the year. Work has commenced to improve data quality and specific milestones will be considered to enable colleges to plan Welsh-medium and bilingual provision effectively.

Work has commenced to develop a national communication and marketing strategy under the auspices of the new Welsh Language Strategy due to be published in summer 2017. There will be various strands targeting young people to raise awareness of the benefits of bilingual skills.

Welsh Government will continue to fund and commission resources to support the teaching and learning of Welsh-medium and bilingual courses. A process of identifying the needs is in place and will be reviewed to ensure its effectiveness in the delivery of the further education sector's requirements. As part of its remit, the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Review Group has been tasked to consider whether the Coleg's remit should extend to the post-16 sector (further education and work based learning), and if so, to provide potential options on how to take this forward. The Group is due to present its report and recommendations to Welsh Government during 2017.

**Publication details:**

The report will be published on or after 24 April 2017 and can be accessed on Estyn's website [www.estyn.gov.uk](http://www.estyn.gov.uk)