



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Post 16 Professional Learning Scoping Study

16 September 2019

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



Post 16 Professional Learning Scoping Study

Final Report

A report submitted by **ICF Consulting Services Limited**
in association with

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1 Introduction

ICF in association with Arad Research were commissioned by the Welsh Government to undertake a scoping study to inform the development of a professional learning framework (PLF) for the post-16 sector workforce.¹ This report provides the findings from the scoping study research, conclusions based on this evidence in relation to the key research questions, and a view on taking forward the development of a PLF. It draws on desk research and qualitative interviews with a wide range of stakeholders as well as the data collected by the Education Workforce Council (EWC) on the qualifications of the post-16 workforce who are registered.

1.1 Why this study?

This study has arisen for a variety of reasons. There have been concerns from Estyn, other bodies and various reviews about the consistency of the quality of teaching in post-16 providers and the ability of the workforce to meet the challenges facing the post-16 sector. A professional workforce could be better placed to meet them.

This is against a backdrop of the development of a National Approach to Professional Learning for the school workforce encompassing teaching support staff as well as teachers at all levels and the implementation of the Hazelkorn review² which will bring together all post compulsory education and training (PCET) for the purposes of direction and funding under a proposed new body, the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER)³. No part of the post-16 sector workforce has any PLF nor is there a strategy for the sector's workforce development.

1.1.1 Sector challenges

The Welsh Government expects learning in the post-16 sector to contribute to its economic and social ambitions for Wales set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to deliver a more equal and prosperous Wales with a thriving Welsh Language. Taking Wales Forward aims to promote and enhance vocational routes into and through further (FE) and higher education (HE) and develop learning opportunities that will benefit learners of all ages and employers and respond to skills' gaps in the labour market.⁴

The FE sector is therefore tasked with:

- Enabling progression to higher levels of education which can range from re-engaging young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and low-skilled adults in learning, to using improved occupational skills and essential skills to complete an apprenticeship, and achieving A levels to enter higher education (HE);

¹ For the purposes of this study, 'post-16 workforce' is defined as further education (FE), apprenticeships, Working Wales and adult learning. Schools sixth forms and higher education institutions are outside the scope of the study.

² A framework for building a post compulsory education and training system for Wales (2016)

³ See the Welsh Government's response in Public good and a prosperous Wales: building a reformed PCET system (2017) and the subsequent Ministerial response to the consultation (2018)

<http://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/4663#A40240>

⁴ Taking Wales Forward: a programme for government (2017)

- Ensuring apprentices and those taking college-based vocational courses are employer-ready;
- Enabling adult workers (and the unemployed) to upskill and reskill in areas that meet employers' needs; and
- Contributing to narrowing the qualification gap among adults at all levels compared to other parts of the UK; reducing unemployment and young people who are NEETs, and providing a workforce with the skills to address businesses' challenges (e.g. automation).

In particular, the sector is expected to play its part in increasing the number and quality of apprenticeships and the provision of more higher level vocational qualifications, as well as responding to changes to vocational qualifications, such as those arising from Qualification Wales's (QW) sector qualification reviews (ongoing), the requirements of the Welsh Baccalaureate, and the demand for Welsh-medium teaching and learning.

All of these provide delivery challenges particularly for the FE colleges and Work-Based Learning (WBL) providers in the sector. In the near future, the sector may expect to adapt their teaching to reflect the introduction of the new school curriculum, further qualification reforms because of changes taking place in England (T levels, vocational qualification streamlining) which will also affect assessment, and the streamlining of apprenticeship frameworks.

1.1.2 Workforce challenges

As 'dual professionals', many members of the post-16 provider workforce are specifically affected by the on-going evolution of job competencies and job roles within the businesses they support. As dual professionals, they need to be up to date in their technical knowledge and skills in their vocational area.

But like all teaching practitioners they are also faced with the challenges of using digital technology for effective teaching; integrating literacy, numeracy and digital skills in the curriculum; dealing with the practical challenges of teaching disparate groups in terms of ability and learning styles; and handling disruptive and difficult behaviours by some learners.

It is generally acknowledged that the quality of teaching has to improve to increase learner achievement. This is principally by improving pedagogical skills in both initial teacher education (ITE) and in continuing professional development (CPD). Several independent bodies in Wales have pointed over recent years to the need for the post-16 sector to improve the quality of teaching:

- QW has raised concerns about the quality of apprenticeship off the job training and of the quality of teaching in the health, childcare and social care sectors by WBL providers;⁵
- Estyn has raised concerns about consistency in the quality of A level teaching and aspects of apprenticeship delivery in some WBL providers⁶;

⁵ Sector Review of Qualifications and the Qualification System in Health and Social care including childcare and play work. Available at: <https://www.qualificationswales.org/media/1904/hsc-report-2016-e.pdf>

⁶ Estyn A levels in sixth forms and FE colleges (2018) and Higher apprenticeships in WBL (2018)

- The Children, Young People and Education Committee's recent review of the Welsh Baccalaureate highlighted training needs for teachers and assessors to ensure more consistency.⁷

Implementation of the Welsh Language Strategy has drawn out the need to provide more Welsh-medium teaching/support to raise the Welsh language competences of all post-16 learners. The capacity of the post-16 workforce to provide Welsh-medium teaching and support needs to be raised considerably to meet this.⁸

For post-16 providers, these workforce challenges could present themselves as either:

Skills' gaps: such as staff not being up-to-date with industry requirements or being able to use (or having access to) the latest technology used in industry, inadequate Welsh language skills for teaching and assessment, lack of higher-level knowledge and ability to assess written work; and lack of pedagogical skills for online tutoring/devising online learning; or

Skills' shortages: such as of Welsh language medium/bilingual teachers, online learning tutors, higher level subject area specialists, English/maths GCSE level specialists, middle managers/college leaders.

There is, however, little hard evidence about the skills of the sector workforce and what skills needs are.⁹ It is principally for this study that the Welsh Government has supported EWC to collect more information from the registered post-16 workforce to provide data on qualifications and Welsh Language skills.

1.1.3 How might a post-16 professional learning framework help?

The international research literature shows reasonably strong evidence, backed up by OECD, that a trained and qualified post-16 teaching workforce enhances the quality of teaching and that investments in CPD can improve the quality of teaching and raise the competencies of teachers.

The following measures which could be part of a PLF could be expected to address workforce challenges as well as skills' gaps and shortages:

- Qualifications as a requirement for teachers, assessors and teaching support workers in post-16 learning, which could demonstrate that practitioners have both technical/practical/employer knowledge as well as requisite pedagogical skills. A framework could prescribe qualifications (and providers), set qualification requirements for registration, and set professional standards to be reflected in qualifications and performance assessments.
- CPD time for professional learning which could ensure all staff have paid time for formal learning. A framework could prescribe minimum entitlements for training/formal learning including industry-time (where appropriate), set requirements to be met for continuing registration and re-registration, require courses to be accredited, and require training programmes for specific groups of staff before or after appointment.

⁷ National Assembly for Wales (2019) Children, Young People and Education Committee, *Bacc to the future: The status of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification*. Available at: <http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld12487/cr-ld12487-e.pdf>

⁸ Welsh Government (2017) *Welsh in education action plan 2017-21*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/welsh-in-education-action-plan-2017%E2%80%9321.pdf>

⁹ The main source is the *National Education Workforce Survey* which has some information from respondents on whether they have studied for academic or professional qualifications in the last 12 months and whether they have undertaken CPD.

- A set of competences based on professional standards covering all the workforce could ensure both ITE and CPD met the needs of the sector and all those providing teaching and assessment including teaching support workers.

The schools' PLF is expected to ensure ITE and CPD is relevant and valued, that all teaching and teaching support staff have CPD which matches their needs and provides pathways for career progression.

1.2 Purpose of study

1.2.1 Study aims

The study draws together an evidence base of primary and secondary research to inform future Welsh Government policy on post-16 professional learning which aligns with its evolving policy affecting the sector. The evidence gathered is used to:

- Evaluate if, and how, the schools' PLF could be developed and implemented as a framework for the post-16 sector which would meet the needs of the whole sector;
- Review the appropriateness of existing post-16 practitioner qualifications and other professional learning for the different groups of staff both currently and into the future;
- Consider and add to the strategic priorities for post-16 professional learning already identified by the Welsh Government (see Annex 1);
- Identify practical recommendations and how they should be taken forward by the different stakeholders, including the proposed new body, the CTER;
- Identify where there is a need for further research.

The study covers the teaching and teaching support workforce in PCET, excluding those in schools teaching in sixth forms and those in universities. This is broadly the workforce in FE colleges, WBL providers and adult learning (AL) providers who teach a wide variety of levels/subjects both vocational and academic. The report generally describes them as the post-16 workforce.

1.2.2 Objectives/research questions

To meet the aims of the study, the following questions are addressed which provide context as well as inform considerations about the value and purpose of a PLF for the post-16 workforce. These are:

What are the workforce challenges faced by the post-16 sector:

- What are the common skills' gaps for the different types of provision?
- Where are the skills' shortages in the teaching¹⁰ workforce/teaching support workforce including management?

What could improve the quality of CPD which would raise the quality of teaching and management:

- Does CPD provide the workforce with the skills it needs?
- What formal learning is available; how are staff enabled to take it up; does it make a difference to teaching, teaching support and management?

¹⁰ This covers tutors, assessors, teachers and lecturers

What learning is evaluated? What can be learnt from it?

- What learning is accredited or recognised in the sector for recruitment or promotion?
- How are staff kept up to date with industry developments?
- How is increased Welsh-medium teaching supported by training?

What could improve the quality of new entrants:

- Does learning leading to qualifications provide new entrants with the skills they need? are the current qualifications fit for purpose? Do they prepare new entrants for Welsh-medium teaching?
- Does having qualified teachers/assessors/assistants etc make a difference to the quality of teaching?
- What individual support and incentives are available to new entrants and to staff working towards a qualification?

Can professional standards make a difference? To what extent are they being used by providers? How do they help with recruitment, performance review and development, for example?

What can be learnt from countries that have professional frameworks for similar sectors:

- What is prescribed and what is guidance?
- Have they provided the benefits intended; are there any unintended consequences?
- How do they handle different groups of staff (different roles and different working arrangements/hours) within the same framework?
- How have they been implemented? How have they developed?
- What roles are played by pan-sector and government bodies?

What can be learnt from the professional framework for schools which is being developed in line with the curriculum reforms:

- Can it be adapted for the post-16 sector? How could its concepts and terminology fit with post-16 providers' understanding?

What would need to be distinctive in a post-16 model?

- What can be learnt from the schools' framework's development and implementation?
- What should be the balance between individual, provider and government responsibility for professional learning?
- How far should government control and manage any of the components of a professional framework?

1.3 What has informed the study?

The research has consisted principally of a mix of desk research and qualitative interviewing, with the latter designed to fill gaps in current knowledge about the workforce challenges and how professional learning is addressed within the sector. It has included:

- Discussions with Welsh Government officials (5);
- A review of 20 reports published by Estyn, QW, the Welsh Government and other bodies which have examined aspects of the post-16 sector workforce's professional development in the last few years;
- A review of qualifications by David Powell of the University of Huddersfield as part of this study and a review of the National Federation of Training organisations in Wales's (NTfW) study on WBL qualifications;¹¹
- A review of the professional standards developed by Professor Lucas, University of Winchester, and those for schools;¹²
- Thirty interviews of stakeholders including bodies representing sector workers (several trade unions) and employer/sector bodies, providers of qualification courses including ITE, Estyn, QW, EWC, and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol (CCC);
- Over 25 interviews of staff in providers about skills' gaps and shortages, training provision, qualification requirements and use of the professional standards. In total this included all the general FE colleges, nine WBL providers and six AL providers;
- Review of the research literature including reports and studies published by OECD, the European Commission and Cedefop reports on the relation between qualities of the workforce and quality of learning and learner achievement in vocational education and on the use/value of PLFs in other countries. This was not a systematic search;
- A more detailed examination of professional learning in the post-16 sector workforce in Australia, England, Ireland, Ontario (Canada) and Scotland using secondary sources and personal knowledge;
- An analysis of the updated registration data collected by EWC to explore the qualifications and skills of the current workforce.

This was supplemented by a wide range of sector conversations across Wales which took place in nine providers (four FE colleges, three WBL providers and two AL providers) and encompassed their staff in all roles (leadership team, middle managers, teachers and assessors, teaching support) as well as in four sector specific forums.¹³ These took place largely during May 2019. The sessions were a mix of interviews, discussion groups and focus groups.

Table 1.1 shows that conversations engaged all groups of staff in all types of provider.

¹¹ NTfW (2018), NTfW scoping exercise on the potential development of a new qualification for WBL practitioners.

¹² Welsh Government (2017), Professional standards for further education teachers and work-based learning practitioners in Wales. Available at: https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/30642/1/171129-fe-wbl-professional-standards-en_Redacted.pdf

¹³ The providers who hosted conversations were: Cardiff and Vale College; Coleg Cambria; Coleg Gwent, Coleg Sir Gâr, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, ACT Training, ITEC Training, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, Swansea Council.

Table 1.1 Members of the post-16 workforce engaged in sector conversations

	FE Colleges	WBL Providers	ACL Providers	HE	Total
Leadership Team staff	28	18	6		52
Middle Managers	51	27	23		101
Teaching Staff	39	51	18		108
Teaching Support Staff	30	7	2		39
Training and development staff	22	9			31
Other roles ¹⁴	9	2	5		16
Stakeholders	1	6	7	3	17
Total engaged	180	120	61	3	364

Sign in data sheets and interview records, ICF

1.4 Structure of the report

Chapter 2 provides further information about the dimensions and characteristics of the post-16 workforce including their qualifications/skills and the organisational/regulatory context in which the workforce's training and development currently takes place.

Chapter 3 sets out what the study has found out about the workforce's skills' gaps and shortages and how they are currently addressed. chapter 4 sets out what the study has found out about the way skills needs are met through entry qualifications, such as for ITE, professional qualifications and CPD and how these are provided and supported by the post-16 sector's providers.

Chapter 5 examines what a PLF can offer and throws a light on what other countries do to enhance and support professional learning and development in the post-16 sector workforce.

Chapter 6 draws together the findings to address the research questions and considers ways forward for what appear to be the conclusions about a PLF for the post-16 workforce in Wales.

¹⁴ This includes various administration and IT support staff that also attended the sessions.

2 Background information about the sector's professional learning

This section provides contextual information: first of all, on the characteristics of the post-16 workforce, including what is known about their qualifications and Welsh language skills, and secondly, on the organisational and regulatory landscape behind how the sector meets its workforce needs - in terms of recruiting new entrants and maintaining and improving the quality of the staff employed - and what policies affect this.

2.1 Post-16 sector workforce

As at April 2019, there are over 13,000 post-16 staff registered by EWC.¹⁵ This covers FE teachers, FE support staff and WBL practitioners. It does not include teaching or support staff in AL providers although some may be registered¹⁶.

Not all registrants have provided information requested about themselves. The EWC estimates that they hold relatively full information on about 70% of the workforce. This is sufficient to use in this report.¹⁷ The information EWC holds for FE and WBL registrants is less complete than that for school teachers. This reflects more recent registration (FE teachers registered from April 2015, WBL practitioners from 2017) and full information not being collected at initial registration. This means that, for example, for 21% of FE teachers and 25% of WBL practitioners no qualifications are recorded. The level of recording varies considerably between providers' workforces.

2.1.1 Demographic characteristics

The sector workforce is generally more commonly female than male: among FE teachers (59% female), FE support staff (70% female), and WBL practitioners (63% female).

The FE teachers' workforce is also considerably older than other teaching workforces but has a similar age structure to FE teaching staff in England (Table 2.1). Among FE teachers, 44% are aged 50 and over compared to 8% aged under 30. In two FE colleges over half are aged over 50. By comparison only 25% of registered school teachers in Wales are aged 50 and over. This difference is less marked among WBL practitioners (36% aged 50 and over which is similar to the proportion aged under 40) but very few are aged under 30 (11%). FE learning support staff are younger with 22% aged under 30.

¹⁵ Some are registered in more than one category which accounts for 15,000 registrations and suitable/able to work in the categories of FE teacher, FE learning support workers and work-based learning practitioners. Over 3,800 are also registered as school teachers and as school learning support workers.

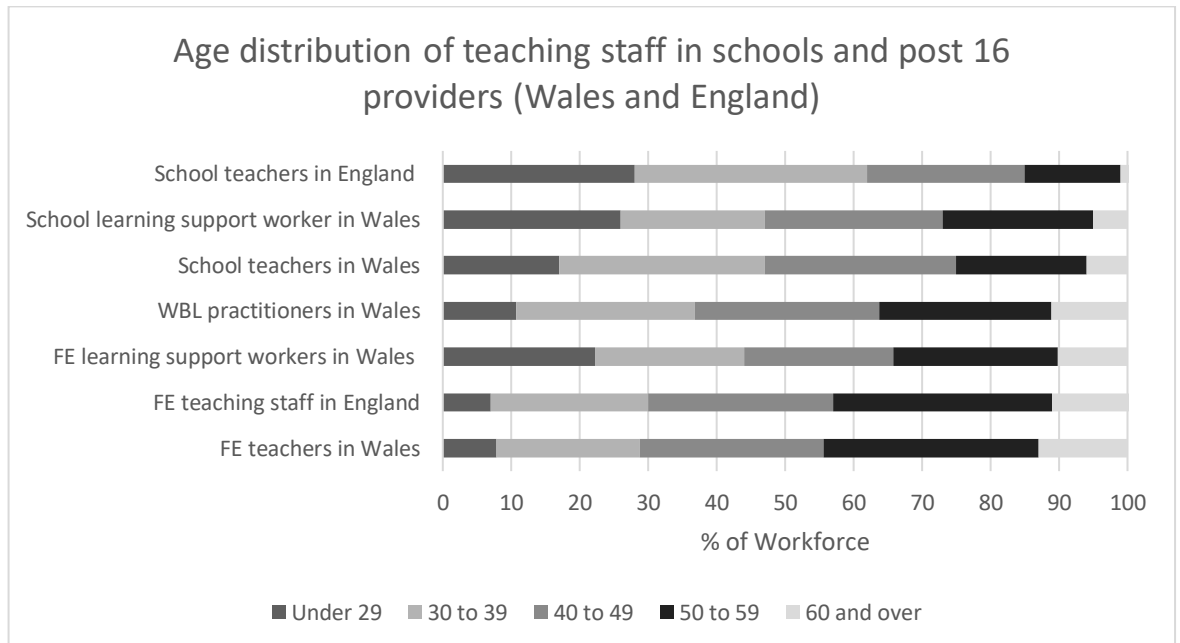
¹⁶ Because of dual registrations and the inclusion of practitioners who are not employed/in work, the EWC estimate a workforce of around 13,300 individuals.

¹⁷ In providing figures for this report, we have excluded those who have not disclosed the information.

Table 2.1 Age distribution of staff in schools and post 16 provision (Wales and England)

	FE teachers in Wales (%)	FE teaching staff in England (%)	FE learning support workers in Wales (%)	WBL practitioners in Wales (%)	School teachers in Wales (%)	School learning support worker in Wales (%)	School teachers in England (%)
Under 29	8	7	22	11	16	28	28
30 to 39	21	23	22	26	30	21	34
40 to 49	27	27	22	27	29	24	23
50 to 59	31	32	24	25	19	21	14
60 and over	13	12	10	11	6	6	2
Total	100	101	100	100	100	100	101

EWC data¹⁸, SIR 26 data (England) and School Workforce in England data Note: percentages have been rounded



Source: EWC data, SIR 26 data and School Workforce in England data.

Very few registrants who have provided this information identify as non-White or having a disability although the proportions are higher than for the schools' workforce. For example, just over 1% of school teachers who provided this information identified as non-White, compared with 4% of FE teachers, 5% of FE support staff and 2% of WBL practitioners. Three per cent of the post-16 sector workforce declared a disability compared with 0.5% of school teachers.

¹⁸ EWC data is based on data extracted from the Register of Education Practitioners on the 1 March 2019 for teachers and support workers and for 1 April 2019 for FE, WBL and learning support workers when the updating process was closed.

2.1.2 Qualifications and skills

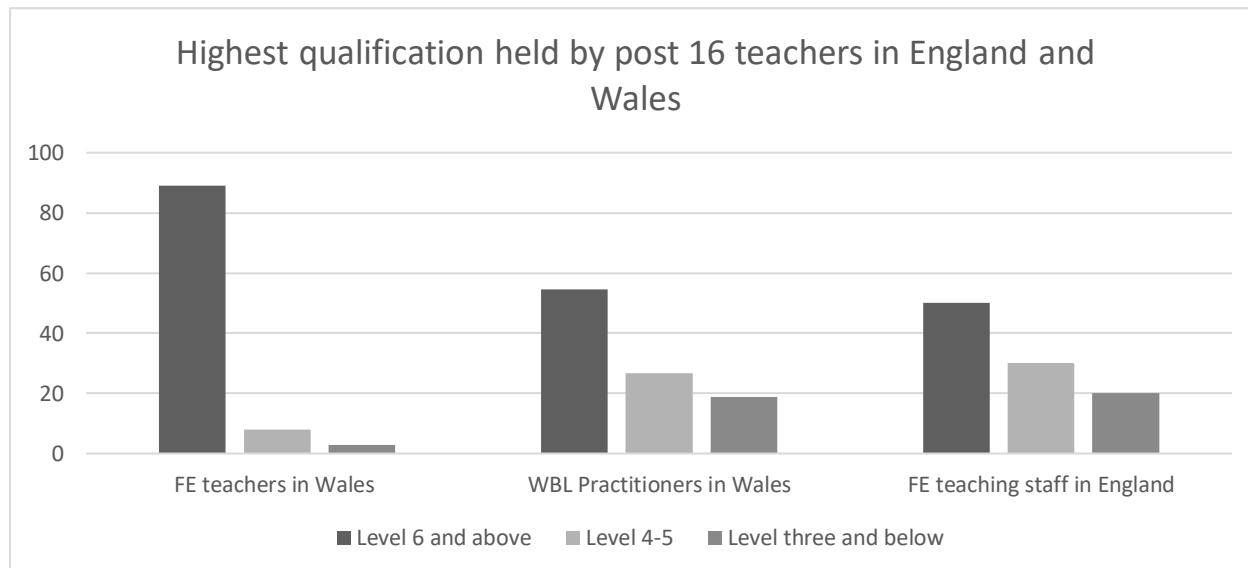
Most FE teachers who have declared their qualifications have a level 7 qualification as their highest qualification (65%) with another 19% having a level 6 or above. Most have a teaching qualification (86% of those with declared qualifications) though this proportion falls below 80% in three FE colleges. Among WBL practitioners who have declared their qualifications, 55% have a level 6 or above highest qualification with 47% holding a teaching qualification and 40% holding an assessor qualification. Nineteen per cent hold only a level 3 or below qualification. Relatively low proportions of FE support staff (27%), WBL practitioners (37%) and FE teachers (42%) have qualifications in subject areas where they work.

On the face of it, the post-16 Wales workforce is better qualified than its counterparts in England (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2 Highest qualification level of teaching staff, Wales and England (excluding 'not known' values)

Qualification Level	FE teachers in Wales (%)	WBL practitioners in Wales (%)	FE teaching staff in England (%) ¹⁹
Level 6 and above	89	55	50
Level 4-5	8	27	30
Level 3 and below	3	19	20
Total	100	100	100

Source: EWC and SIR 26 data (England)



Source: EWC and SIR 26 data (England)

All groups of the workforce have relatively few members who have reported that they can work/teach through the medium of Welsh; 14% of FE teachers, 11% of WBL practitioners, and 12% of FE support staff who reported their skills in Welsh. An additional 5-6 percentage points of each say they are Welsh speakers but not able to work/teach through the medium of Welsh.

¹⁹ Includes those teaching in FE colleges, independent providers, local authorities and other providers such as specialist college, third sector providers and adult education providers (19+) and so encompasses FE and WBL.

2.2 Meeting the sector workforce's skills' needs

2.2.1 Organisational arrangements

The sector workforce's skills needs are largely determined and met by their own employers, the individual providers. They are expected to fund these from their grant/contract payments and fee income. They generally:

- Determine what qualifications are required by recruits (see below for the exceptions) and whether these are qualifications which can be obtained after appointment;
- Decide on what qualification training to support and what this covers (commonly course fees, providing paid time off to attend taught sessions and some remission) for both new entrants and staff seeking promotion/development;
- Determine what CPD training is offered. This commonly includes enabling staff to develop their skills through line managers, mentors and peers; providing formal training and learning events; enabling attendance at training events provided by awarding bodies in relation to their qualifications; and paying course fees for external courses.

Further information on the processes, qualifications and CPD training can be found in chapter 4.

Professional standards for practitioners covering teachers and assessors in the post-16 sector were developed and agreed after consultation several years ago through a co-production process led by Professor Lucas and sponsored by the Welsh Government.

There is currently some external funding for what providers do:

- The Welsh Government currently gives grants to FE colleges from its Skills Priorities Programme (SPP), a programme which aims to expand the capability of the FE sector to deliver job specific higher-level skills learning which matches needs in regional skills plans. Three FE colleges manage regional funds from this for a mix of bespoke CPD, industrial placements and qualification training. In 2019/20 the Welsh Government is intending to allocate £5m for the SPP, and is considering how this can be used to support CPD;
- NTfW arranges various training, including annual conferences, presentations and workshops focusing on various aspects of CPD and sharing good practice aimed at WBL practitioners. During 2018/19 NTfW secured grant funding from QW to deliver a series of *Quality Matters* workshops for WBL practitioners with responsibility for quality assurance. Most of its other training is undertaken on a cost recovery basis;
- The National Centre for Learning Welsh, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and ColegauCymru are delivering the *Cymraeg Gwaith* (Work Welsh), a programme which is upskilling the Welsh language skills of around 400 FE teachers as well as around 250 HE tutors and lecturers;
- Welsh Government has provided Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation Grant funding to deliver two CPD programmes aimed primarily at FE colleges - *Leading, supporting and delivering inclusive change* and *Maximising the practice of teaching assistants*;
- ColegauCymru arranges network events (e.g. curriculum and quality managers) and annual practitioner conferences which focus on aspects of professional learning;

- Jisc delivers digital support for the FE and skills sector, including workshops focused on how FE practitioners can use technology to address the professional standards.

In the recent past, the Welsh Government provided part-funding (through its Quality Improvement Fund) of CPD for around 600 WBL practitioners during 2017 and 2018. This was coordinated by NTfW, who also arranged CPD conferences using the funding. ColegauCymru have led/coordinated other training required for new developments in the curriculum, e.g. ALN, and sponsored the organisation of networks of different groups of FE staff e.g. teaching and learning networks. The Welsh Government's Welsh language sabbatical scheme, which enables teachers to take a sabbatical to develop their Welsh language skills, was previously open to FE teachers. The Cymraeg Gwaith (Work Welsh) scheme now fulfils this role in FE (see above).

There is also some external funding for qualifications. The Welsh Government's PGCE PCET funding currently provides grants for students enrolled on full-time courses provided at four universities.²⁰ These are worth £3000 for those intending to teach scientific, technical engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects, Welsh and literacy/numeracy, and £1000 for all others. In the 2018/19 academic year, 39 students had the £3000 award and 131 students had the £1000 award.

2.2.2 Regulatory framework

The activities of post-16 providers are determined by legislation and guided by remit letters and funding guidance (FE colleges), contracts and guidance (WBL) and grants/local authority funding allocations (AL). Funders expect providers to have staff who are qualified to teach and assess, and to enable effective learning.

All post-16 providers are inspected by Estyn. Although it is evident from its reports that it has examined the skills and CPD of staff, it is now planning to include the examination of professional learning in its inspection framework.

The teaching and assessment qualifications which are taken by the workforce are:

- Regulated by Qualifications Wales if they are sub-degree qualifications offered by recognised awarding organisations, through QW's conditions of recognition; or
- Reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)/Higher Education Academy (HEA) if they are degree or post-graduate level FE teaching qualifications. They are not inspected by Estyn, which is the case for degree or post graduate level school teaching qualifications.

From September 2019, ITE courses for school teachers will be assessed, evaluated, and monitored against the Welsh Government's *Criteria for the accreditation of initial teacher education programmes in Wales*. EWC's ITE accreditation board (13 publicly appointed members) will carry out this function, as recommended in *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers*.²¹

Post-16 providers are expected to observe the following:

- The Further Education Teachers' Qualifications (Wales) Regulations 2002 which broadly requires FE teachers who had not been school or FE teachers before 1

²⁰ These are for one year so do not apply to students taking part-time courses or working in the sector.

²¹ See *Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers: Options for the future of initial teacher education in Wales* (Furlong, 2015) <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150309-teaching-tomorrows-teachers-final.pdf> Further information on the ITE accreditation board's membership is available here <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/ite-accreditation/initial-teacher-education-ite-accreditation-board.html>

July 2002 to be/become qualified within two years if working full-time and four years if part-time. The qualifications include a certificate of education, a stage 3 FE teaching qualification and qualifications in the 1999 regulations. It is not too clear how these relate to the current qualifications (see section 4.1.1 for a list of these).²² FE colleges' awareness and interpretation of this regulation was not a focus of this study. It does not apply to WBL or AL providers because the regulations only relate to provision at a further education institution;

- A minimum requirement for FE lecturers to have paid time for 30 hours CPD a year. This arises from a joint trade union negotiated agreement with ColegauCymru in a new national contract for all staff employed in FE Colleges in Wales which members voted to accept.²³ This applies to no other groups of staff though in practice many providers extend this to some or all staff.

Individual staff working in the sector as indicated above are required to register with EWC as a condition of employment and pay an annual fee to remain registered. , EWC offer an online professional learning passport (PLP) to record their CPD, a benefit requested and funded by the Welsh Government.²⁴ As at July 2019, 32% of the FE and WBL registrants with a PLP account are active users²⁵, which is 6% of FE and work-based learning registrants as at July 2019.

Once registered they have to observe a code of conduct which sets out seven key principles of good conduct and practice for registrants.²⁶ One of the key principles is closely linked to professional learning, namely that registrants 'take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their professional practice', and the code requires that registrants:

- Adhere to the relevant standards for their role;
- Maintain high standards of practice in relation to learning, classroom and workshop management, planning, monitoring, assessment and reporting;
- Keep their professional knowledge and skills up-to-date throughout their career;
- Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of relevant guidelines and educational developments in their particular role, and learning in general;
- Reflect upon and evaluate their practice as part of their continuing professional development;
- Are open to, and respond positively and constructively to feedback regarding their practice;

²² It is not particularly clear what was a stage 3 qualification and how this related to stage 3 posts nor what are the qualifications allowed in the 1999 regulations. These appear to be qualifications from other parts of the UK and elsewhere and a degree plus a course of initial teacher training. The 2002 regulations can be found here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2002/1663/contents/made>

²³ See Section 5 (pages 3 to 4) of the (2013) *National Agreement on Lecturers' Workload Allocation* for FE Colleges in Wales which stipulates that staff must take part in CPD in accordance with their employer's policy, and that this must include a minimum of 30 hours of CPD each year. Pro rata arrangements apply for part-time staff https://www.ucu.org.uk/media/6799/National-agreement-on-lecturers-workload-allocation-for-FE-colleges-in-Wales-Sep-13/pdf/fewales_workloadallocationscheme_sep13.pdf

²⁴ Other benefits include access to EBSCO, the research bursary, support and guidance, presentations and events. More information available <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/registration/benefits-of-registration.html>

²⁵ A user is considered to be "active" if they have created three or more assets or logged into the PLP at least 3 times or shared one or more assets.

²⁶ EWC, Code of Professional Conduct and Practice for Registrants with the Education Workforce Council. Available at: <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/fitness-to-practise/code-of-professional-conduct-and-practice-pdf/file.html>

- Seek support, advice and guidance where necessary.

Many of the key principles in the EWC code of conduct are closely related to the post-16 professional standards: namely that registrants have regard to the safety and well-being of learners in their care; base their relationship with learners on mutual trust and respect; work in a collaborative manner with colleagues and other professionals, and develop and maintain good relationships with parents, guardians and carers; and take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their professional practice.

2.3 Establishment of the CTER

The Welsh Government's proposal to establish the CTER, and implement the new arrangements over a five-year period, will be a key development in the post-16 sector. The creation of the CTER creates potential opportunities in terms of planning and funding post-16 professional learning in a more strategic way. The commission will be responsible for planning an integrated post-16 sector and will potentially be able to incentivise and facilitate collaboration between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and FE, WBL and AL providers. It may look to integrate professional standards and the approach to CPD. The CTER will need to work closely with EWC and QW to ensure that funding for professional learning is aligned with regulatory requirements and qualification reforms.

2.4 Implications for the study

The EWC's registration data for the post-16 sector workforce is far from complete although it is statistically unlikely that the qualifications of those who have not provided full information do not match those who have. Consequently, the data should be sufficient to be used in modelling of need/demand for qualifications which has hitherto not been possible.

With over 40% of FE teachers aged 50 or more, a large number can be expected to retire in the next ten years. The similarities with England's FE teaching workforce suggest that this has been a long-term feature.

The qualification profiles of different groups of the workforce indicate some need for a higher level qualification and certainly for a teaching qualification:

- Nearly 20% of WBL practitioners who have provided this information have a level 2/3 qualification as their highest qualification;
- Just over half of WBL practitioners and one in seven of FE teachers who have provided this information do not have a teaching qualification.

The take-up of PGCE PCET grants may reflect limited interest from recent graduates in entering the sector and explain the small numbers of FE teachers aged under 30. Training up a mature workforce with vocational experience to teach in the sector looks to be a continued need which such incentives may not appeal to.

It is clear from the mapping of Welsh Government funding that providers fund most of the CPD and qualification training themselves both direct costs (fees, training staff, cover staff) and indirect costs (paid time-off).

It is also evident that:

- Relatively few of the registered workforce (6%) are active users of the PLP;

- EWC's code of conduct for registrants requires them to take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their professional practice in similar ways to the professional standards; and
- Arrangements for quality assuring and monitoring FE teaching qualifications differ from those established for school teaching qualifications.

3 Skill needs and shortages in the post 16 workforce

This chapter presents findings on the current skills' gaps and shortages in the workforce. It draws on a review of sector literature; interviews with a sample of employers/sector groups and providers, Estyn and Qualification Wales; and the sector conversations.

3.1 Priority areas for improving competence

Skills' gaps are those competences which many existing staff should have but are not up to the industry/professional standard and require CPD.

3.1.1 Pedagogical skills

Both reports by Estyn and stakeholder interviewees identified that staff often required training in teaching skills²⁷. Specific areas which were highlighted included:

- Developing questioning techniques;
- Identifying ways to structure learning to stretch learners more and incorporating this in learning activities;
- Providing constructive feedback.

These were reported to be more common issues among tutors/lecturers who had been recruited from industry and had not completed pedagogical training but not exclusively. This was reiterated in sector conversations. This has been found to be a problem in the teaching of apprenticeships in general and in construction and engineering teaching in FE colleges and WBL.

More specifically and persistently, the literature (2017 and 2018 Estyn Annual reports²⁸) and provider and employer body interviewees identified that many staff continued to lack the competence to teach essential skills effectively (literacy, numeracy and digital) as part of their teaching by embedding and contextualising them. This has become more challenging because of the Welsh Government's strategy to increase the delivery/level/quality of literacy and numeracy required in post-16 education.

In response to this, many of the providers deliver in-house literacy and numeracy training for teachers, often supplemented by online training. One WBL provider reported that staff were required to develop their essential skills each month through training courses. In another case, one college had introduced a Literacy and Numeracy Champion who works across the college to support staff and students with essential skills. Providers have observed improvements in staff literacy and numeracy skills where pass rates in training tests have increased.

3.1.2 Subject knowledge

Many senior level interviewees in providers and employer bodies reported that some vocational teachers have out-of-date industry knowledge which is not being updated quickly/frequently enough. This was more particularly but not exclusively in

²⁷ Estyn (2016-17) The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales; Estyn (2017) Torfean Inspection Report; Estyn (2017) Acorn Inspection Report

²⁸ Estyn (2016-17) The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales; Estyn (2017) Acorn Inspection Report; Estyn (2018) Coleg Gwent Inspection Report

engineering, construction and IT where technological developments more rapidly and significantly change workplace practice. It was pointed out that many teachers have been out of the industry for over 10 years and relatively few undertake lengthy industry placements to maintain and improve their industry knowledge.

Some providers reported that it was difficult to find time away from teaching for staff to keep up-to-date with their industry knowledge and that some teaching staff lacked the confidence to catch up having become out of date. Others had strategies to enable this as part of CPD. This included 'back to work' placements and organised off-site time for teaching staff to engage with employers when they were able to fit this in with other activities when visiting employers.

Teaching staff and their line managers in the sector conversations generally said that they had to self-manage this where they did not practise their vocation outside the provider, otherwise they would not keep up to date. This was often difficult for full-time teachers because they have to arrange this with employers and line it up to their teaching commitments. Few teaching staff admitted that this was a skills' gap.

3.1.3 Underpinning skills

The Estyn Annual reports, many of the interviewees and participants in sector conversations identified **digital skills** as a substantial training need for the post-16 workforce²⁹. These are generally competences using technology-enabled pedagogy and being confident to use the latest classroom technology, including awareness and knowledge of Apps and games as well as how to integrate them into their teaching practice (e.g. for assessment and building e-portfolios) although these were becoming increasingly available. This was identified as being an issue across the sector and not subject-specific.

'Digital skills need to be showcased to learners, so staff need to feel confident in using systems.' **WBL learning and development practitioner, sector conversation**

Providers reported that they had worked on improving staff's digital skills but there remained many who need to move away from the Powerpoint to using digital resources for teaching and learning. Some of the more experienced tutors have 'missed out on the digital agenda' and 'find it difficult to develop their digital skills'.

All providers have said that they have tried to upskill and improve digital skills among their staff through internal and external training courses and self-assessment. Some have organised twilight and weekend training sessions to provide additional opportunities for staff to upskill. An AL provider purchased tablets for tutors to use and employed a specialist to work with them to develop their competences. Another provider said that staff used professional networks, such as Microsoft teams and Learn My Way, to share knowledge on ways to incorporate digital skills into learning. One provider reported using online classrooms to create digital professional learning communities across different campuses. Some WBL providers mentioned training delivered by Jisc relating to using digital learning for distance learning

Most of the providers found these methods successful in helping improve digital skills among staff. However, it was recognised that a key aspect of digital skills is

²⁹ Estyn (2017-18) Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales; Estyn (2016) Adult Community Learning in Wales; Estyn (2017) Coleg y Cymoedd Inspection Report; Estyn (2017) Acorn Inspection Report; Estyn (2018) Coleg Gwent Inspection Report

being able to integrate ever new technologies into teaching practice which adds value.

The literature, interviewees and many participants in sector conversations have also highlighted that staff have insufficient **Welsh language skills** to promote Welsh among learners and to teach in Welsh³⁰. Interviewees in all types of provider reported gaps in practitioners' general awareness of the Welsh language and the opportunities and resources available for Welsh speaking learners. For example, some staff and stakeholders reported that many practitioners had low levels of awareness of which courses and learning materials were available for Welsh-speaking learners, and of which staff and learners spoke Welsh within their institution. It was reported that this lack of awareness could affect practitioners' ability to provide Welsh-speaking learners with opportunities to access Welsh-medium resources or use the Welsh language during sessions. Some providers and stakeholders referred to accessing training provided by Sgiliaith to address this issue, but that there needed to be a more systematic approach to improving Welsh language awareness (e.g. by including it within entry qualifications).

Interviewees also highlighted that there were many staff who had some considerable ability to speak Welsh but who were not at the level to be able to teach (or assess) in Welsh. As indicated above (section 2.1.2) these account for around a third of the Welsh speakers in the workforce already.

3.1.4 Knowledge and awareness of mental health

A few providers and some participants in sector conversations believed that awareness and knowledge of mental health and an understanding of how to support learners with behavioural difficulties as a result of mental illnesses was a competence increasingly required by all staff in contact with learners. Some interviewees reported that there were increasing numbers of learners with ALN and mental health issues entering the FE sector, with one provider estimating during sector conversations that around a quarter of their learners had mental health issues.³¹ They said that few staff had training and many lacked confidence in supporting learners with mental health conditions. Many staff were finding they needed training.

Some providers had organised training sessions on coping with mental health conditions. The training included different strategies tutors could use to help learners, such as taking regular breaks, and recognising the effects of medication. One ALP had signed up for Time to Change Wales which provides resources and runs regular events on mental health.

³⁰ Estyn (2017-18) Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales

³¹ Addressing the mental health needs of students was identified as a challenge by FEIs in *Research to establish a baseline of the Special Educational Needs system in Wales* (Welsh Government, 2019) <https://gov.wales/research-establish-baseline-special-educational-needs-system-wales>

3.2 Shortages of skilled staff

Skills' shortages are those jobs which cannot be filled by new entrants or skilled staff from elsewhere.

3.2.1 STEM subject teachers and assessors

Providers of all types commonly reported difficulties in recruiting STEM teachers. FE providers generally have difficulties recruiting lecturers in engineering and maths, and occasionally computing which has meant disruptions for students, a poorer quality of teaching (from non-specialists or lower qualified individuals) and in one instance a course being stopped. WBL providers have similar difficulties recruiting assessors in construction and engineering.

'We can't compete with the salaries that those sectors [IT and Engineering] can provide professionals.' FE learning and development manager

AL providers reported general recruitment and retention difficulties across all subjects, with attracting STEM specialists considered a particular challenge which meant that non-specialists were being used. One AL provider referred to a tutor who was teaching languages, humanities and STEM subjects due to a shortage of staff.

Providers reported that there were generally small numbers of applicants for teaching positions in most STEM subjects. In response to this, a few providers have used financial incentives to attract new staff in STEM subjects. For example, recruiting staff on a higher salary point on the scale in comparison to other subjects. One college reported that they offer the highest salary scale when recruiting for new positions in engineering though most pointed out that there is not much flexibility for paying unqualified staff and considerable competition with schools. Most providers have lowered requirements and upskilled new staff or retrained existing staff so that they can teach STEM subjects or teach them at higher levels.

With uncompetitive salaries for FE teaching compared with jobs in the private sector for engineers and computer scientists, for example, some providers indicated that if the teaching vocation and working life were attractive then providing free training to be qualified as a teacher could be an incentive.

3.2.2 Welsh language

Most providers of all types and various reports identified the shortage of teachers and assessors to meet demand for Welsh medium teaching.³² Most providers identified persistent difficulties in recruiting staff with adequate Welsh language skills for teaching in a wide range of subjects, not necessarily all. Colleges, WBL and AL providers highlighted that they struggled to recruit Welsh speaking staff, in both teaching and learning support positions. This created challenges for providers in terms of being able to offer courses through the medium of Welsh.

The reasons for this were reported to be few candidates available who were competent to teach in Welsh or who could improve their competency to reach that level or to work bilingually in a class (e.g. converse/provide feedback in Welsh). Colleges reported that they had provided training courses of varying intensities which staff can undertake to improve their Welsh language skills but the take-up has reportedly been low. Although national programmes to develop the Welsh language skills of FE practitioners are being delivered by stakeholders, some providers

³² Estyn and Coleg Cymraeg; ³² Qualification Wales (2016) Sector Review of Qualifications and the Qualification System in Health and Social Care;

highlighted a lack of similar provision in the WBL and AL sector (with the exception of Welsh for adults provision). AL providers have tried to make their tutor posts for Welsh speakers more appealing to potential applicants, such as longer contracts.

3.2.3 Assessors

Many of the interviewees in WBL providers have identified a shortage of qualified assessors across the sector. Most WBL providers said they faced difficulties in recruiting to these positions lately as the economy has picked up and some of the workforce have returned to industry for higher salaries. This has extended beyond engineering and construction to subjects including hospitality, sustainable resource management, and health and social care. With few applicants, those with vocational experience sometimes lack the formal vocational qualifications or level of qualifications in English/Welsh and mathematics or have assessor experience (which would need updating) but without a vocational qualification at level 3.

In response, providers have reported upskilling staff into assessor roles. Several providers have recruited trainee assessors or learning support staff and provided CPD, mentoring and time off for obtaining assessor qualifications.

3.3 Implications for the study

Although the scale of these skills' gaps and shortages is not currently known which represents a barrier to effective strategic workforce planning, the qualitative evidence indicates that there are skills' gaps:

- Commonly and persistently in all parts of the existing workforce: pedagogical skills for teaching/tutoring literacy and numeracy and digital skills to use digital resources and software in teaching;
- Commonly in FE and WBL: up to date subject knowledge of some vocational teachers/assessors, particularly where business/industry change is rapid;
- Commonly and persistently in FE and WBL: confidence to use the widest range of teaching approaches;
- Specific concerns about practitioners' Welsh language skills and non-Welsh speakers' awareness of the needs of Welsh speakers, Welsh-medium opportunities and resources.

Most FE and WBL providers are addressing these in their training and development.

In relation to skills shortages, there are:

- Commonly and persistently in all types of provider: shortages of STEM subject teachers/assessors, most particularly in engineering;
- Commonly in WBL providers: shortages of qualified assessors in many subject areas;
- Commonly in all types of provider: shortages of Welsh-medium teachers/assessors with the language competence needed to teach/work in Welsh.

The PGCE PCET funding provides higher grants for STEM subject teachers studying full-time but not for Welsh-medium applicants. Some providers are addressing these shortages in their recruitment strategies (pay, adapt role, offer training) and/or addressing these in their training and development (upskilling existing staff). This is explored further and in more detail in chapter 4.

4 Provision of workforce training and development

This section presents the findings relating to the qualifications and CPD provided to the post-16 sector workforce in terms of availability, take-up, delivery and quality. It draws on the findings of interviews and focus groups with providers and stakeholders as well as a review of available data and literature and an independent assessment of the content of the qualifications.

4.1 Qualification training

The availability, take-up and quality of qualifications for post-16 practitioners are discussed below.

4.1.1 Qualifications available

This section provides an overview of the providers, mode and level of study, entry requirements and course duration of qualifications that are available specifically to those who wish to teach in the post-16 sector in Wales.

There are at least 39 practitioner qualifications available and used by practitioners teaching in the FE, WBL or AL sectors.³³ These include at least:

- **7 education and training** qualifications e.g.
 - Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in Post-compulsory Education and Training (PCET);
 - Award, Certificate or Diploma in education and training;
- **17 learning support** qualifications e.g.
 - supporting learners with ALN, literacy, coaching, information and guidance
- **15 learning and development** qualifications e.g.
 - assessor, quality assurance qualifications.

There are at least 24 providers of some of the above qualifications in Wales, of which at least 14 are within the FE and HE sectors only and 10 are private sector training providers.

The main **education and training** qualifications specifically aimed at those seeking to teach in the post-16 sector in Wales are listed below. Education and training qualifications include HE accredited ITE courses which are delivered by several HEIs and most of the FE Colleges in Wales. Most of these courses can be followed on a full or part-time basis, depending on the provider, with a typical course duration of one or two years. The list also includes qualifications accredited by awarding bodies which are delivered by a mix of FE and private training providers. These are typically shorter courses, delivered in a series of workshops.

³³ The *NTFW scoping exercise on the potential development of a new qualification for WBL practitioners* (NTFW, 2018) identifies a total of 35 different practitioner qualifications used to train the teachers, trainers, assessors, and learning support staff in the post-16 workforce in Wales. Of these, 19 qualifications are indicated as the main ones used by providers. This list of 35 does not include some education and training qualifications such as the PGCE, PgCE and PCE PCET, ESW Digital Literacy qualifications or any of the standalone Level 5 subject specialist qualifications in Literacy, Numeracy, ESOL or SEND (Learning Disabilities and Difficulties) in its findings. It also does not include two new Welsh for Adults qualifications in development and likely to be available during 2019/20.

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in PCET;
 - Usually requiring candidates to have a degree for entry and a Level 3 qualification in their chosen subject area;
 - Typically a qualification at Level 6-7;
- Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PgCE) in PCET;
 - Usually requiring candidates to have a Level 3 qualification in their chosen subject area;
 - Typically a qualification at level 5-6;
- Certificate in Education in PCET;
 - Entry requirements vary with level;
 - Typically at Level 4-5;
- Certificate in Education and Training;
 - Level 4 certificate, delivered mainly by private training providers, accredited by awarding bodies including Agored and City & Guilds;
- Award in Education and Training;
 - Level 3 award, delivered over 4-5 weeks in some FE colleges and around 10 private providers, accredited by several awarding bodies.³⁴

In addition to the above, *Preparing to Teach Short Courses* (typically one module of the PGCE or PgCE) is offered in some FE colleges, typically over a 10-14 weeks' period, as a pathway to one of the aforementioned courses.

In terms of the types of provider and mode of study, four HEIs offer full-time pre-service courses of PGCE (FE) ITE leading to a qualification to teach further education.³⁵ Another, Cardiff Metropolitan University, delivers a part time ITE to teach in FE, while Bangor University and Aberystwyth University accredit courses delivered by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Coleg Cambria respectively. Most FE colleges offer part time ITE PCET courses, only Coleg Cambria offers full-time.³⁶

Table 4.1 below provides a summary of information published by providers on their ITE PCET courses. No information is published on the number of places available on PCET ITE courses, although the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) does collect participation data on the number of student enrolments on ITE courses within various categories, including FE and KS4 and post-16 (age ranges 14-19). (see Section 4.1.2).³⁷ Interviewees in the providers delivering the PGCE PCET

³⁴ The Level 5 *Diploma in Education and Training* is also offered by awarding bodies including City & Guilds and Pearson Edexcel. It includes around 1200 total qualification time but does not appear to be currently delivered by providers in Wales.

³⁵ These are Cardiff University, Glyndŵr University, University of South Wales and University of Wales, Trinity St David. See Welsh Government (2018), *Teacher training incentives in Wales for PGCE (FE) students – academic year 2018/19*. Available at: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-09/teacher-training-incentives-in-wales-for-pgce-fe-students-academic-year-2018-19.pdf>

³⁶ Most FEIs deliver courses accredited by a Welsh HEI. For example: Gower College Swansea, Bridgend College and Coleg Gwent deliver courses awarded by USW (which are, in turn, accredited by the HE Academy); GLIM deliver courses accredited by Bangor University; Coleg Cambria deliver courses accredited by Aberystwyth University; Pembrokeshire and Coleg Sir Gâr deliver courses validated by UWTSO and accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA).

³⁷ HESA collects 'Initial Teacher Training' enrolment data by 'phase and scope' using the categories listed [here](#)..

indicated that they did not have quotas or specific numbers of places available on their courses.

Interviewees also indicated that some changes had been made to the courses in recent years, in response to changes in the skills needs of practitioners. Providers said that their courses now included digital skills, self-reflection, handling ALN and developing learners' independence. As well as changes to content, they had changed delivery, with more focus on block learning. Most interviewees indicated that the post-16 professional standards had not influenced the content changes.

Table 4.1 Overview of ITE PCET courses available in Wales 2019

Provider	Course	Mode	Level	Duration	Entry requirements
USW	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PgCE) in Post compulsory Education and Training (PcET)	Part time or full time	Level 6	1-2 years	2:1 degree and GCSE Grade C English and Mathematics desirable.
	Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in Post compulsory Education and Training (PcET)	Part time or full time	Level 7	1-2 years	2:1 degree and GCSE Grade C English and Mathematics desirable.
Glyndŵr University	Certificate in Education (PCET)	Part time or full time	Level 4-5	1-2 years	Applicants must hold at least a level 3 qualification in their subject discipline.
	Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PCET)	Part time or full time	Level 6-7	1-2 years	Applicants must hold a degree with a classification of First or 2:1.
	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) PcET	Part time or full time	Level 6	1-2 years	Applicants must hold a degree.
Cardiff University	Post-Compulsory Education and Training (PCET) (PGCE)	Full-time	Not stated	1 year	Should possess at least a 2:2 degree in a subject they wish to teach and grade C GCSE Maths and English Applicants with extensive work experience considered on individual basis.
University of South Wales and University of Wales, Trinity St David	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education	Part time or full time	Not stated	2 years	Applicants must be qualified in their specialist area with a degree or Higher National Diploma, Advanced City and Guilds Certificate or appropriate level three qualifications.
	Professional Certificate in Education	Part time	Not stated	2 years	
	Preparing to Teach Short Course	Part time	Not stated		
Cardiff Met	Professional Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) PCET	Part time	Level 4-6	2 years	A degree A qualification at Level 3, or above in the subject they intend to teach.
	Professional Certificate of Education (PCE) PCET.	Part time	Level 4-5	2 years	A qualification at Level 3, or above in the subject they intend to teach.
	Preparing to Teach in PCET	-	Not stated	10 weeks	Level 3 award/qualification in the subject that they are intending to teach.
GLIM (Bangor University award)	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education - PGCE (Professional)	Part time	Level 4-6	2 years	Honours Degree (at least 120 credits, with half at Level 6 or above). Equivalent GCSE grade C or above.

CAVC (USW awarding)	ProfCE PcET Professional Certificate of Education (PcET)	Part time	Level 4+	30 weeks	Level 3 qualification in the subject that they are going to teach.
	PgCE Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PcET)	Part time	Level 4+	30 weeks	Degree. Level 3 qualification in the subject that they are going to teach.
	Preparing to teach	Part time	Not stated	12-14 weeks	
Cambria (Aberystwyth University awarding)	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education PCET	Full-time		1 year	For the Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (ProfGCE-PCET) - you must possess a degree.
	Professional Certificate in Education PCET	Full-time	Level 5-6	1 year	Vocational Experience and a Level 3 or above qualification (NVQ / A- Level).
Bridgend College	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education/Professional Certificate in Education (PCET)	Part time	Not stated	2 years	Degree or recognised professional qualification.
The College Merthyr	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education/Professional Certificate in Education (Post Compulsory Education and Training)	Part time	Level 5	2 years	Graduates: 2:1 degree or above desirable in a relevant subject area. Non-graduates: experience in a vocational area, or of working in a teaching or training environment is needed. Mathematics and English language GCSE Grade C or above desirable, but not essential
Pembrokeshire (UWTSD)	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and Professional Certificate in Education (PCE).	Part time	PGCE 6 PCE 5	2 years	Vocationally competent and qualified to Level 3 within the area you intend to teach/instruct.
Coleg Sir Gâr (UWTSD)	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education	Part time	Not stated	2 years	Higher level academic, craft or equivalent professional qualification required. Applicants to the postgraduate programme must be graduates before they enter the programme.
NPTP (USW awarding)	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE PCET)	Part time	Not stated	2 years	Degree relevant to the subject specialism and GCSE Grade C or above English and Maths.
Coleg Gwent (USW awarding)	Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PgCE) in Post compulsory Education & Training (PcET)	Part time		2 years	Level 3 qualification in the subject that applicants wish to teach. For Professional Certificate in Education, applicants should hold qualifications to at least undergraduate level in the subject they wish to teach.

4.1.2 Qualification take-up

FE, WBL and AL providers confirmed that they usually require practitioners to hold at least one of the education and training qualifications listed in 4.1.1 (more likely an assessor qualification in WBL). Where they do not hold the qualification but are otherwise appointable and prepared to obtain the qualification, they are required to enrol on a course. The general sentiment is:

'I'd much rather an excellent carpenter that needs to qualify and learn to be a teacher, than a teacher that has not practised a vocational skill for 20 years. I would prefer someone who knew their trade and we could train them to teach.' **AL practitioner**

FE provider interviewees believed that they had maintained a consistent policy of recruiting teaching staff with qualifications and supporting suitable applicants with subject knowledge to obtain a teaching qualification although the pay grade for those without a teaching qualification was a recruitment problem. Interviewees in WBL providers felt that the proportion of WBL staff holding teaching qualifications had increased in recent years because more providers required their new staff to gain a teaching qualification within two years of starting to work in the sector. It was acknowledged that entry requirements varied a lot with a 'mixed bag of practice'.

AL interviewees have indicated more challenges to recruit qualified staff.

'We've advertised three times in the last 6 months and no one with Level 3 has applied. To need a teaching qualification and then needing someone who wants to work full time hours – it's a struggle to recruit.' **AL provider**

Some said that new recruits had to fund themselves to obtain a teaching qualification; others that with limited funds, it depended on how many hours they were teaching.³⁸

Comprehensive data on the take-up of education and training qualifications for the post-16 workforce is not published. HESA publish data on the number of candidates studying ITT courses (2017/18) which includes those training to become school teachers. No specific information is published on participation in PCET ITE courses.³⁹ The 2017 *National Education Workforce Survey* found that 15.8% of 'FE teachers' and 17.5% of 'FE learning support workers' who responded had 'Studied for academic or professional qualifications in the last 12 months.'

One HEI provided data on the number of candidates enrolling on their PGCE PCET courses, suggesting that around 110-120 candidates undertook the course each year, and that around three-quarters of these were part-time students. HEIs generally have close links with specific FE colleges and interviewees said that this helped to boost take-up of full-time courses by potential FE teachers as well as professional in-house training staff in businesses.

³⁸ Most AL providers reported that funding available from the Welsh Government (part funded by the EU) to support practitioners to gain teaching qualifications was no longer available.

³⁹ Although HESA does use specific identifiers (based on JACS codes) when collecting data on participation.

4.1.3 Quality of qualifications

Governments expect awarding bodies to design qualifications that equip those who complete them with all the know-how and know-that for jobs and roles that are constantly evolving, while providers can fall into the trap of assuming that a teacher who has completed ITE has the skills, knowledge, and behaviours “to teach and to do this well.” (Winch, 2017, p.viii). The wider research on teacher development shows that there is a need to recognise that the acquisition of knowledge takes time and there is a need to train, recruit, and retain teachers and work-based learning practitioners in the profession for eight or more years if they are to “achieve peak performance” (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012, p.59) in their practice.

This was acknowledged in *A Review of Initial Teacher Training in Wales* (Tabberer, 2013), which recommended ‘seeing teacher education as a continuum’ and outlined that ‘closer cooperation bonds between different education providers’ were necessary as well as CPD. ‘ITE is not the only part of professional development’.⁴⁰ The Furlong Report (2015) which proposed revisions of ITE also made one of its key recommendations that the schools system should be ‘offering continuing support so that teachers can refresh and develop throughout their careers’. ‘The teachers of tomorrow will have to take personal and collective responsibility for their professional development.’⁴¹

While many practitioners in the post-16 sector recognise that ITE needs to be seen by all as the starting point for a career in teaching or training, there is considerable dissatisfaction with the quality and availability of qualifications. As the NTfW report (2018, para 46. p.11) states “the majority of providers are having to plug the gaps that are not covered by the current qualifications available and this is resource-intensive for the network and is inconsistent across the sector which is potentially a concern for ensuring the quality of staff development for the whole sector.”

FE

Most interviewees from FE colleges considered that the education and training qualifications for post-16 education practitioners require review and reform. This was particularly the case for the PGCE, PgCE and PGCE PCET qualifications, which were described as ‘very traditional’ and ‘not up-to-date’ by many interviewees. Many practitioners, and providers of the PGCE PCET indicated that greater flexibility was required within the qualification, with less academic and more practical relevance to classroom management.

‘The PGCE [PCET] is not flexible enough to respond to current issues’ FE middle manager

Many current practitioners and recent students believed that practitioner qualifications needed to better reflect trends in learners’ needs as well as policy developments affecting the sector. Interviewees referred to the implications of policy developments such as the ALN and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, Essential Skills Wales, Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers, and the Digital 2030 framework. See box below.

⁴⁰ See *A Review of Initial Teacher Training in Wales* (Tabberer, 2015) <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/131007-review-of-initial-teacher-training-in-wales-en.pdf>

⁴¹ See *Teaching Tomorrow’s Teachers: Options for the future of initial teacher education in Wales* (Furlong, 2015) <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/150309-teaching-tomorrows-teachers-final.pdf>

Box 1 The need for change

Welsh language

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's *Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh-medium Action Plan* includes a vision to enable all learners to maintain or develop their Welsh language skills and aims to make a significant contribution to the Government's goal of reaching a million Welsh speakers by 2050. The action plan notes the following priorities:

'Ensuring that the PGCE FE prepares staff effectively to operate effectively bilingually is crucial. Identifying suitable models of best practice to significantly enhance bilingual opportunities within the programme would support the development of a bilingual workforce. Further, we would propose that specific incentives to teach bilingually are considered for those undertaking a PGCE (FE)' Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh-medium Action Plan, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.⁴²

Findings from the interviews were consistent with these priority areas, with most FE college interviewees and stakeholders mentioning the need for practitioner qualifications to better support the development of Welsh language skills in the workforce. Some interviewees considered that there should be mandatory Welsh language or Welsh language awareness modules as part of the PGCE PCET training. It was suggested that such a module could be tailored depending on the language skills of trainees. For those able to teach in Welsh training could cover strategies for teaching in Welsh or bilingually, while for those with limited or no Welsh language skills, awareness training could develop their ability to support Welsh speaking learners.

Some interviewees emphasised that there is a need for more qualifications to be deliverable in Welsh, and that increasing Welsh language workforce capacity should be a key goal of any professional learning framework. Specific issues were raised such as providers and awarding bodies not having sufficient numbers of lecturers, assessors and external examiners able to deliver through the medium of Welsh (particularly in vocational subjects e.g. childcare). These views reinforce one of the recommendations of the Diamond Review, that Welsh Government should *'work with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, HEFCW, the HEIs and other stakeholders such as further education institutions...in order to secure maximum impact and greatest value from public investment in, and support for, Welsh-medium higher education.'*⁴³

Additional learning needs

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 (the Act) makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with ALN and, for the first time, places duties on FEIs in terms of assessment and provision for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) in post-16 education and training. The Act requires a new mandatory ALN Code of Practice to contain a standard Individual Development Plan (IDP) and forms which schools, FEIs and local authorities must use. PCET practitioner qualifications need to take account of these reforms so that new entrants to the sector are adequately prepared for them. Some interviewees felt there was an increasing need for practitioners entering the FE sector to have the skills to differentiate their teaching styles and to support learners with different types of needs appropriately (e.g. mental health, resilience).

Some stakeholders highlighted examples of good practice in terms of ALN modules within PGCE PCET courses. However, stakeholders also noted that there was inconsistency in the amount of ALN-related content in PGCE PCET courses, with some providers placing greater emphasis on it than others. Stakeholders felt that there was insufficient focus on

differentiated learning and universal provision within ALN modules of PGCE PCET programmes.

“The ALN module is fairly ‘meaty’ in one of the [PGCE PCET] providers but quite thin in another. The quality and content can vary over time and often depends on individual tutors” **Stakeholder**

Curriculum reform and the common inspection framework

Post-16 practitioner qualifications will need to prepare candidates for the potential implications of school curriculum reform in Wales for the post-16 sector and potential revisions, as a consequence, to Estyn’s common inspection framework, which sets out the five areas of inspection for all work-based learning providers and (since September 2018) FE colleges, Local Government Education Services and Welsh for adults providers.⁴⁴ The Welsh Government’s consultation document *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum: Proposals for a new legislative framework* proposes a further four main questions that will be used in school inspections, and notes that:

‘Further work will be required on how this looks within a future common inspection framework, but this will form part of a formal consultation by Estyn as the work progresses.’ Welsh Government, 2019⁴⁵.

Interviewees among providers and stakeholders believed that practitioner qualifications require review in order to reflect wider Welsh Government policy relating to curriculum reform (e.g. an increased focus on learner and practitioner self-reflection, well-being and professional learning).

Some FE colleges who delivered the PGCE PCET said that they tailor the content of courses to what they perceive to be the needs of practitioners and learners in the sector in line with their resources. However, this is not a national or regional collaborative process and they generally felt that their courses were fit for purpose, but that some modifications were required to meet the expectations of the new professional standards; in particular, around literacy, numeracy and bilingual skills development.

During sector conversations, most interviewees said the assessor qualifications (e.g. Training Assessment and Quality Assurance (TAQA) and Institute of Occupational Safety and Health) did not adequately prepare practitioners for teaching and were too focused on competency assessment with little on teaching and tutoring skills. Some also felt that assessor qualifications were not keeping pace with wider changes such as the shift towards end-point assessment, which means greater use of tests and written work which would need teaching input to develop learner skills and provide feedback, and an increased focus on digital learning, which requires new skills. In some providers, in-house training was addressing this or further qualification courses.

⁴² See <http://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/media/main/2015colegcymraeg/dogfennau/s-2210/towardscymraeg2050.pdf>

⁴³ See *The Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance Arrangements in Wales* (Welsh Government, 2016) <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/higher-education-funding-final-report-en.pdf>

⁴⁴ These are Standards; Well-being and Attitudes to learning; Teaching and Learning Experiences; Care Support and Guidance; Leadership and Management. See <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/document/common-inspection-framework-september-2017-0>

⁴⁵ See *Our National Mission: A Transformational Curriculum: Proposals for a new legislative framework* (Welsh Government, 2019). Available at: <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2019-02/consultation-document-transformational-curriculum.pdf>

Some FEI interviewees went further than proposing a review of practitioner qualifications by saying there was a need for a new post-16 teaching qualification. These providers felt that the PGCE PCET was not tailored enough to the needs of FE and that assessor qualifications were insufficiently focused on teaching and learning, suggesting that a new qualification could meet both aspects.

‘Sometimes it feels like there’s a qualification missing for FE, something that covers teaching and learning and assessment.’ FE interviewee

Most recognised that because of the diversity of applicants to such courses a flexible entry qualification was required that could meet the needs of graduates, non-graduates and those entering post-16 education from industry. A few practitioners commented on the limited portability of the PGCE and PgCE PCET qualifications, noting that it did not provide Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) to teach in schools. A few interviewees felt that there should be a single qualification enabling practitioners to teach in schools and post-16 settings, and transfer from one sector to another. Others felt that qualified school teachers often needed mentoring support after starting in FE and WBL settings.

Some interviewees felt that new practitioners including those with teaching qualifications were ill-equipped to manage and cope with learner behaviour and use behaviour management strategies.⁴⁶ Ofsted (2019) have lately indicated that building the mental resilience of trainee teachers is an important aspect of teacher training.

WBL

The education and training qualifications being used in WBL sector – the Level 3 Award, the Level 4 Certificate, and the Level 5 Diploma – were written in 2013 and “largely based on guidance produced by the Learning and Skills Advisory Service (LSAS) in 2011, which itself evolved from the curriculum introduced in 2007 to implement the Lifelong Learning LUK standards” (Hanley et al., 2018, p.10). As such, they do not embed or reflect the Education and Training Foundation’s (ETF) (2014) 20 professional standards for teachers and trainers or the Welsh sector’s (2017) 10 professional standards for FE teachers and WBL practitioners.

The suite of WBL education and training qualifications is due for review in 2020. Stakeholders and interviewees in WBL providers considered that qualifications will need to be substantially revised to reflect changes such as government priorities around subject specialism, safeguarding, mental health, behaviour management, evidence-based practice, research-led practice, teacher workload, and the Welsh sector’s new professional standards.

Within the three education and training qualifications ‘subject-specific pedagogy is given some prominence, but with the exception of the specialist qualifications in English and mathematics – aimed mainly at teachers of language, literacy and numeracy – there is no attempt to make explicit the areas of pedagogical knowledge that must be covered. For this reason, there is considerable variation between providers in terms of the content of subject-specific pedagogical knowledge made available to trainees, and in the approaches used to develop this knowledge.’ (Hanley et al., 2018, pp10-11).

As such, it is unsurprising that the NTfW report (2018, para 14. p.4) identified “maintain[ing] and update[ing] knowledge of my subject(s) and how best to teach

⁴⁶ While the situation may have improved a UCU, the largest teaching union in FE, commissioned a survey of its members in England which found that almost 40 per cent of those surveyed had not received any training to support them when dealing with disruptive behaviour (Parry and Taubman, 2013, p.36).

and assess them” as one of their four “target areas for staff support”. This is likely to be particularly important for those involved in teaching higher level qualifications at level 4 and 5 (Hanley et al., 2018). This knowledge is recognised by Professional Standard 5 in the professional standards in Wales.

The NTfW report (2018, para 14, p.4) also identifies as a key area for professional development the ability to “critically reflect on own values, knowledge and skills to improve learning.” (Professional Standard 10). Critical reflection is covered within the level 5 Diploma, though not sufficiently at levels 3 and 4. The report also indicates that the three education and training qualifications all refer to trainee teachers using ‘reading and research’ but evidence-based practice is not explicit in any of them (NTfW, 2018, p.4).

By and large WBL interviewees and stakeholders felt that WBL practitioner qualifications are not fit for purpose because they focus on a narrower range of assessor skills rather than teaching skills when WBL provision was increasingly focused on requiring staff to do mentoring, coaching and both one-to-one and group teaching, which requires different skills. The NTfW report (2018) identifies that the new professional standards ‘reveal how teaching has become an accepted element of the job role.’ It does caution, however, that ‘some practitioners still do not see this as part of their job role, and this is ultimately linked to salary banding and pay scales’ and recommends taking into account the changes to job roles through national structures.

Some stakeholders felt that current teaching qualifications were not tailored to the needs of those teaching vocational subjects, while others commented that there was a need for a WBL teaching qualification that reflected the blend of teaching approaches used in the sector: group and one-to-one delivery, coaching and mentoring. Interviewees also considered that current teaching and assessment qualifications did not focus enough on providing WBL practitioners with the skills they needed to embed literacy, numeracy and digital learning within their work, such as using digital skills in portfolio building or in blended learning.

During sector conversations, WBL participants highlighted challenges relating to progression from assessor qualifications to teaching qualifications. Some felt that there was no clear pathway linking the numerous assessor qualifications to the PGCE, for example. Some WBL practitioners who had undertaken a PGCE said that it had been beneficial to them in terms of teaching essential skills, session planning and organisation, classroom management, being able to teach diverse groups of learners and practitioner confidence but there was no financial incentives for them to do so unless they moved to an FE teaching job.

‘There’s no incentive to get more qualified as you don’t get any more money. The pay must be reflective of your qualifications and the responsibilities of your role.’ **WBL practitioner, sector conversation**

Some WBL managers and practitioners did not agree with this entirely as there are progression roles in WBL.

‘The vast majority of staff see the benefit in completing qualifications without needing extra money. Motivation can be the recognition and progression within their roles.’ **WBL learning and development manager**

AL

Most AL providers were broadly satisfied with the quality of teaching qualifications available to those wanting to work in the sector. Some interviewees considered that subject-specific PGCE qualifications were preferable to the more general content of a PGCE PCET.

4.2 Continuous professional development

Below, we explore how CPD is developed and delivered by providers as well as how well this meets the needs of the sector.

4.2.1 How is this developed by employers

FE

FE college managers generally described developing their CPD at institution level, with most having their own strategic approach informed by some national priorities, such as ALN, Prevent, and essential skills. They indicated that they use information they hold on their workforce's skills (collected through staff appraisals, practitioner self-assessment, skills audits, learning walks and lesson observations) alongside national and local policy priorities and legal requirements in developing CPD programmes. Few indicated that the professional standards had significantly influenced the development of their CPD approaches though in one case they had been tagged to their own competences framework for FE teachers.

Interviewees reported that they are aiming to make further improvements to identifying and delivering CPD needs. Many said that they require staff to develop their own professional learning programmes as part of their overall staff performance review and development processes. This depends on the extent to which managers and individual staff are proactive in identifying needs and opportunities for learning.

Some interviewees highlighted how they use practitioner self-evaluation data and student voice surveys to identify gaps in staff skills, monitor progress and identify high performing practitioners who can become in-house mentors.

Many interviewees described planning some mandatory CPD, often linked to compliance with legislative or policy requirements, and more specific individual or group support (e.g. teaching techniques, planning, literacy and numeracy and digital skills). Some reported that they planned CPD in response to changes to the curriculum and opportunities for practitioners to access work placements to enhance industry knowledge.

'There is diversity amongst staff in terms of roles – business, teaching and learning, support – all staff need CPD and we are dealing with big numbers of staff so we are trying to do more to support CPD infrastructure.

Performance appraisal is an integral part of CPD.' **FE representative**

Interviewees indicate that some FE colleges have undertaken internal skills audits relating to their curriculum offer and, in some cases, this approach has been supported by external review of teaching and learning, using observers from different colleges and feeding the results of this into their CPD programme. These audits have examined skills such as teaching techniques, planning, Welsh language, literacy and numeracy and digital skills, all of which have been identified as areas for improvement.

Many interviewees indicate that CPD is individualised with one to one support from line managers and mentors. This has meant that *'staff development has become more meaningful and focused on embedding skills and knowledge in their practice.'* While this approach can be of benefit in terms of sharing skills and knowledge within institutions some concerns were expressed regarding the lack of clear and consistent sectoral responses to professional learning needs and structures to identify and support progression.

Several interviewees felt that their colleges aimed to promote a culture and ethos of training and development for all staff. CPD in these institutions has previously been identified and led by management but now staff are being encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for their professional learning.

'We have looked at whole college areas such as teaching techniques, planning, Welsh language, literacy and numeracy and digital skills. For lots of the teaching staff, their main strength is technical skills so they need support to develop literacy and teaching strategies... ...It is bespoke to individual needs rather than institutions.' **FE representative**

Most interviewees reported that one of the challenges of adopting a whole college approach is that the CPD needs of staff can be very diverse. Staff and stakeholders acknowledged the professional standards as a positive step forward for the sector but did not draw on them to develop CPD. The majority had concerns about their 'vagueness' and 'meaningfulness' and noted that they had their own institutional standards, to which their CPD policies were aligned. One college reported that they had added the professional standards to their lesson observation and appraisal documentation, and that Estyn had asked about their implementation of the standards during an inspection.

WBL

Although some examples of sector-wide professional development were mentioned by WBL providers and stakeholders, the development of CPD was largely described as a provider-led process, with some evidence of collaboration and co-commissioning among WBL providers. Examples of good practice mentioned by providers and stakeholders included some Wales-wide CPD managed by NTFW and funded via the Welsh Government's *Quality improvement fund*, and latterly by delegate fees. During sector conversations, some providers commented favourably on training provided through the medium of Welsh and the support provided by Sgiliaith.⁴⁷ Others referred to training events organised by the Quality Skills Alliance – a WBL provider-led partnership.

WBL interviewees said that they had developed employer CPD plans which included mandatory training required as part of the Welsh Government WBL contract (e.g. literacy and numeracy, Welsh language) and UK Government requirements (e.g. Prevent training). WBL providers also said that they planned CPD based on specific policy developments (e.g. ALN transformation programme, literacy and numeracy, Welsh language standards).

The WBL staff engaged in sector conversations described processes similar to FE colleges in developing individual CPD programmes through appraisal, and mentoring, formal WBL assessment/validation processes. Most staff recognised that this was continuous and relevant development.

Most interviewees and stakeholders said that the development of CPD plans was also driven by the requirements of the awarding and professional bodies with which

⁴⁷ See <https://www.gllm.ac.uk/sgiliaith/about-us/>

they worked. Many practitioners in the WBL sector are mandatory members of professional bodies and have minimum number of CPD hours to complete through those organisations (e.g. hairdressing – HABIA, Dental nursing, accounting).

In terms of the content of CPD, WBL interviewees reported that there was a growing focus on mentoring, coaching and group teaching competences alongside assessing and verifying competencies. Some believed from their experience from working elsewhere in the sector that there remains considerable variation between WBL providers in the extent this would be found. Some interviewees believed that there is a growing acceptance within the sector that CPD is needed to maintain professional confidence and attract staff to work in the sector.

AL

All AL providers interviewed said that they had a CPD programme, although some indicated that they did not have a documented strategy for professional development. Stakeholders reported that there were variations in AL partnerships' approaches to developing CPD.

The exception to the above was in the Welsh for Adults (WfA) sector, with CPD planned and provided on a national basis by the National Centre for Learning Welsh and at a regional level by 11 individual WfA providers.⁴⁸ Some stakeholders and providers felt that these developments could ensure greater consistency and improve the status of the WfA sector within AL.

All AL interviewees mentioned that they had some mandatory training requirements for staff. Some of these were driven by their local authority's corporate policies (e.g. health and safety), while other requirements were specific to the delivery of learning provision. Some requirements were driven by national policies linked to AL (e.g. Prevent, safeguarding), with others driven by their skills needs in terms of teaching and learning, for example one-day sessions focused on sharing good practice in areas such as co-moderation and digital skills.

There was some divergence in the views of AL providers on the way in which CPD is developed and the amount that staff are expected to undertake. This reflects findings from recent research led by the Learning and Work Institute, which found that '...professional development is still institutional-based and designed to deliver centralised curricula based largely on qualifications.' All AL interviewees felt that they had processes in place for identifying skills and training needs at an organisational as well as at individual level (e.g. through appraisals).

'We have an in-house CPD programme covering pedagogy and teaching assessment of learning. We're currently looking at accreditation with [awarding body].' **AL provider**

AL sector stakeholders report, however, that there is little or no strategic funding to support staff progression to meet requirements set by Welsh Government and little funding within their organisations because of funding cuts. Unlike the FE sector there is a lack of capacity and expertise to develop and support CPD in house.

4.2.2 How is this delivered

⁴⁸ A more strategic approach to workforce planning is evident in the WfA sector, with some stakeholders referring to the recent development of a WfA workforce development strategy, and proposals to develop two new WfA practitioner qualifications. The National Centre for Learning Welsh is responsible for all aspects of the WfA education programme - from curriculum and course development to resources for tutors, research, marketing and e-learning. The Centre works with 11 providers across Wales. See <https://learnwelsh.cymru/about-us/providers/>

FE

FE college interviewees generally reported that almost all CPD was delivered in-house, with a little external commissioning of formal training. There was little co-commissioning or collaboration between FE colleges apart from a few training developments funded by the Welsh Government which required this. Many interviewees referred to network activities and good practice events and conferences organised by ColegauCymru (some of which were no longer occurring). Some interviewees noted that reliance on in-house delivery inevitably meant there were variations in the capacity and ability of providers to develop or deliver some training, especially where institutional demand was small.

Most of the respondents said that CPD was generally focused on changes to the curriculum, teaching and learning, and opportunities for work placements to enhance industry knowledge. Examples of CPD mentioned included the delivery of essential skills, literacy and numeracy skills, giving feedback to learners to help them improve their work; supporting learners into the world of work; observation and adopting best practice from other providers; undertaking effective peer observation; assessing impact and evidencing results. Most believe that the amount of training has increased because of compliance requirements (e.g. health and safety, disability legislation).

Some FE interviewees felt that they aim for a balanced approach to meeting staff need, focusing on teaching and learning e.g. new assessment measures plus more general skills like behaviour management methods and safeguarding along with Welsh language, literacy and numeracy and digital skills.

Several FE colleges reported that they are encouraging higher level teaching staff to undertake action research and increase engagement with their peers within HEIs. In one institution this has involved 16 hours of CPD time looking at pedagogical skills through self-reflection and self-evaluation of progress and learning delivery. The activity also included lesson capture linked to the professional standards of teachers and new teaching techniques. Another FE college has encouraged the development of a mentor group of practitioners who provide support to more able and talented students to engage in action research sharing their results with wider teaching and learning staff at a research conference.

'Opportunities (e.g. sabbaticals) in HE are the norm for research and writing, this approach has to come down to post 16 too. There would be a big impact on quality process for staff and students if so. This should be a given for post-16.' **Post-16 Stakeholder**

FE teachers are generally given time-off for industry placements if these are appropriate to update their technical knowledge and find out how businesses apply new techniques. These can range from a couple of hours fitted around other business with an employer to part day visits, placements, and study trips e.g. construction staff going to Denmark and Iceland to look at sustainable housing strategies. Staff say this is sometimes difficult to undertake if they are not continuing to practise their vocational skills but generally happens.

Some colleges are working with universities and local authorities to develop cross sectoral CPD opportunities e.g. masterclasses and specialised training for mental health and stress.

WBL

Most WBL providers rely on in-house training but many say they have benefited from the training offered through NTfW. All WBL providers said that they deliver

training as part of practitioners' induction and support development of all staff through courses, coaching and line management.

AL

Most AL providers use a combination of regular practitioner observation, termly CPD days (using in-house and external resources) and networking or good practice sessions to deliver CPD. Some AL providers are able to access training from the partnership FE college (spare places on courses, specific training extended to include them, access to online courses/modules). Whether the AL provider was working in partnership with a college and whether they charged for access appeared to influence expectations of the amount of CPD practitioners would do.

4.2.3 How far does this meet needs

FE

The last *National Education Workforce Survey (2017)* found that just over half (53%) of FE teachers who responded estimated that they had undertaken 30 hours or more of CPD in the past 12 months, with 42% estimating they had undertaken less than 30 hours, and 4% stating they had undertaken no professional development (1.4% provided no response). This may indicate not enough CPD is currently being provided by FE colleges, or that some practitioners do not recognise some (or all) of the training they receive as CPD. It could also reflect that some staff choose not to take-up training opportunities for a variety of reasons (e.g. lack of time, perceptions of their own skills needs and the quality/relevance of training).

All colleges interviewed reported increasing demand for CPD among staff and that they are being proactive in encouraging this. Most interviewees believed that they are meeting and exceeding the 30 hours minimum entitlement, with this being routinely monitored through staff review processes and data capture systems.

'The college's view is that you are accountable for your professional practice these days as a teacher. It is your job to keep on top of change, staff are provided with time and space to ensure their CPD needs are met.'

FE provider

The survey also found that just over a quarter (28%) of FE teachers felt that their professional development needs over the last 12 months had been fully met, with most (59%) that they had been partly met, and some (11%) they had not been met at all. The main barriers for accessing the required CPD identified in the survey were conflict with work/not enough time (71%) and cost (46%).

During sector conversations, most FE practitioners and managers reported they had accessed a variety of different types of CPD provision. Many practitioners felt they accessed training relatively regularly and that all told this exceeded 30 hours. But this not consistently stated. A few practitioners and managers believed that there were variations depending on the subject they taught, who their manager was, and the individual's motivation.

Although FE interviewees and stakeholders mentioned a few gaps and inconsistencies in the current CPD training offered by providers, they also tended to have favourable views on their own institutions' current approaches to and support for CPD and its relevance to their role. Some interviewees mentioned challenges in delivering CPD systematically and in commissioning external providers to deliver some types of CPD provision (e.g. ALN training, digital skills). Some college training staff considered that their CPD programmes supported staff in meeting the

professional standards, however there was little evidence that the standards were an important driver of the content of CPD.

When asked in the workforce survey which development opportunities they would welcome most, the most commonly selected areas were ICT and digital skills (32%); subject/industry knowledge (31%); differentiated learning techniques (including ALN and more able and talented learners) (28%); curriculum design (28%); and motivating learners (26%). Furthermore, the survey indicated that 10% of practitioners were either not at all confident or not very confident in using ICT in their work. These areas align with many of the skills gaps identified by interviewees in chapter 3.

All FE interviewees noted that staff appraisals were a key part of their approach to professional development, however the evidence from the *National Education Workforce Survey* (2017) shows that just over a quarter (28%) of 'FE teachers' who responded indicated that they had never received a performance management review or had not received one in the last 12 months. Additionally the survey found that 'There was also variation in terms of what the review covered which suggests a lack of standardised approach to managing performance and career development.'

Although most FE training staff interviewees said that they gathered feedback on their CPD activities, some indicated that training outcomes were not always evaluated and monitored as systematically as they could be. Some indicated that monitoring and evaluation is becoming more embedded within colleges through staff performance review processes, and that this was being done to ensure CPD is meeting staff needs. In these colleges, interviewees described how CPD is monitored, noting that managers can see levels and amount of training for staff through training approval processes, recording by individual staff and monitoring systems.

Stakeholders and providers welcomed the principle of using the PLP, with one stakeholder noting that 'we see the passport as a key part of any framework developed in the sector... ..if there is a critical mass using it, it could be transformational'. However, some interviewees considered there to be potential risks of duplication associated with implementing the PLP alongside colleges' own systems of monitoring professional learning and progress. For example, some providers were currently examining whether they could avoid information being recorded in two separate systems.

'Using both EWC and our own passport system [means it] can be difficult to track efficiently all staff needs and collate data to assess whether teaching staff have met their 30 hours. This is currently being looked at, so will be clearer to track.' **FE provider, sector conversation**

A further challenge mentioned by some FEI practitioners during sector conversations related to how much CPD was currently recorded, and what was considered as 'valid CPD'. Many practitioners commented that they were unsure about 'what counts as CPD'.

'About a third of our CPD is captured via the passport, and two-thirds of informal CPD is not recorded. Some is recorded and some not, so what qualifies as CPD?' **FE provider, sector conversation**

Some stakeholders mentioned that there was a lack of training available for Additional Learning Needs Coordinators (ALNCos) in FE settings. These stakeholders noted that, while there was not yet a national programme of ALNCo-specific training, school ALNCos were potentially able to access training such as the school leadership programme endorsed by the National Academy for Educational

Leadership (NAEL). Stakeholders noted that, while some regional educational consortia allowed FEI staff to access training, this programme was not available to all practitioners in FE, and that leadership training was institution-led rather than being delivered or quality assured nationally.

'The [FE] sector is crying out for consistency in CPD. Some consortia are happy for FEIs to book onto their training, but others don't do that.'

Stakeholder

WBL

WBL interviewees described variations in the amount of CPD delivered by WBL providers and its quality. Stakeholders commented that WBL providers who rely primarily on delivering CPD internally often face more challenges than those that are more able to bring in external providers to meet needs. Some stakeholders contrasted the availability of external CPD support in the WBL sector unfavourably with the schools' sector.

CPD training has evolved in line with roles in the WBL sector too. Interviewees indicated that there is now more focus on reflective practice, peer-to-peer development, coaching, mentoring and encouraging membership of professional bodies.

'The appetite is there for more training and there needs to be a differentiated approach by having a minimum requirement for CPD hours in WBL. This will be beneficial in terms of transparency and accountability.' **WBL stakeholder**

During sector conversations, WBL practitioners were generally happy with the CPD that was available and which they took advantage of. However, some practitioners felt that industry-specific training was delivered too infrequently, and that it could be difficult to keep up with recent developments within their sector (e.g. new legislation and rules). Some felt this could lead to professional isolation for some practitioners. Some providers referred to challenges in releasing all their staff to access training, though others were able to make arrangements even for whole staff training.

AL

Interviewees have described CPD in the sector as being reactive and inconsistent, much as was recognised in the *Review of Adult Community Learning in Wales* (Welsh Government, 2016). This recommended that 'The Welsh Government should consider commissioning the development of national strategies and frameworks for CPD and quality assurance in AL'.⁴⁹ The review also noted that:

'Raising standards and supporting the professionalisation of the workforce should be a national priority and should be subject to a single strategy applied on a Wales-wide basis. Similarly, AL provision should be subject to uniform quality assurance standards that apply to all provision.' *Review of Adult Community Learning in Wales* (Welsh Government, 2016) (p.81).

Some AL providers tended to emphasise that there were fewer opportunities for professional learning compared with schools.

'In the schools sector there is more funding, and professional learning is available from the [regional] consortia, WJEC and others.' **AL provider**

⁴⁹ See *A review of Adult Community Learning in Wales* (Welsh Government, 2016) <https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/161020-acl-review-en.pdf>

'Estyn expects like for like from schools and AL partnerships. There's not enough money and funding to deliver mandatory CPD like Prevent. Unlike FE, we don't have skills in-house to deliver these subjects.' **AL provider**

Many felt that CPD was largely related to mandatory requirements giving little space for other needs except where it was possible to access training from other members of ALPs or government funded training. Some AL providers considered that:

- Professional isolation was an issue in AL with few opportunities to meet other practitioners and take advantage of networking opportunities. These interviewees felt that practitioners and providers have to develop their own professional learning in isolation;
- There was a need for more training for AL practitioners to teach those with mental health issues and ALN as many had teaching roles which required pastoral and learning support.

4.3 Implications for the study

Qualifications

- There are a lot of qualifications with considerable numbers of different providers (HEIs and awarding bodies). Though there is little published information on take-up, some must have relatively few learners
 - Updating and revision may not be economic and difficult to engage providers.
- There are a wide range of education and training, learning support and learning and development qualifications currently available and used in the post-16 sector in Wales.
 - This range reflects the diversity of roles and range of entry points.
- Practitioner qualifications are not currently aligned with the new post-16 professional standards and many have not been adapted to fully reflect recent policy developments and trends within the sector.
 - e.g. ALN transformation programme, curriculum reform, evidence-based practice, digital learning, literacy and numeracy, behaviour management, mental health.
- While there is some evidence of changes to content and delivery of ITE PCET qualifications, there is also evidence that they are inconsistent in some areas (e.g. ALN).
 - Providers report having to tailor the delivery of practitioner qualifications, or developing bespoke CPD to plug the gaps that are not covered by the current qualifications available.
 - This is resource-intensive and can lead to inconsistent approaches across the sector.
- There is general support within the WBL sector for new education and training qualifications and the rationalisation of current learning and development qualifications. The FE sector has more mixed views.
- There was support within the WBL sector for minimum practitioner qualification requirements. There were, however, some employer concerns expressed about whether this would adversely affect recruitment and retention although some felt it would attract and retain staff qualified to teach.

- Most AL providers were broadly satisfied with the teaching qualifications available to those wanting to work in the sector, with the challenges outlined as being more linked to funding to access these.

CPD

- Practitioners and stakeholders broadly accept that professional learning is of value to achieving improvement. Many strongly support it in their institutions and point to the improvements made and the impact this is having on individual staff development and group performance.
- Some examples of nationally commissioned CPD programmes were mentioned and these appear to be well received by providers and valued by practitioners.
 - Collaborative, centrally or co-commissioned CPD and events have been coordinated by NTfW and ColegauCymru.
 - National and regional approaches have been taken to CPD in relation to the Welsh language.
 - WfA training delivered by the National Centre for Learning Welsh and its partner providers;
 - the Work Welsh scheme in developing Welsh language capacity in FE.
- Most CPD is being developed and delivered at provider-level rather than being planned, commissioned or delivered collaboratively at a national or regional level.
 - This raises potential challenges regarding capacity, cost effectiveness, quality and consistency of delivery.
- Providers generally have CPD plans in place covering all staff and most referred to an evidence-based approach to identify and support staff skills and knowledge needs which was largely corroborated by staff.
 - CPD development is often linked to organisational and institutional plans, particularly within the FE sector, and changing learner needs.
- While there are examples of forward-looking approaches to developing CPD, CPD policies in providers generally appear to be reactive, which can mean they neglect persistent problems (skills' needs and skills' shortages) and longer term issues (replacing older staff, progressing teachers to managers).
- There are generally favourable views across the sector on the professional standards.
 - They are seen as a positive development in supporting professionalisation of the sector, especially in WBL and AL, and are broadly consistent with providers' views of competencies needed in relation to developing CPD plans.
- However, there is little evidence that CPD is being developed to align with the professional standards.
 - Some FE colleges often reported that they have their own standards and there is limited evidence of them being used in practice to provide competences underpinning qualifications and CPD.
- Evidence from the literature suggests that not all practitioners are satisfied with the CPD offer or performance management arrangements.
 - A large proportion of practitioners surveyed do not believe they are receiving the required 30 hours of CPD.

- Though when interviewed or in focus groups, more believe that they achieve at least 30 hours.
- Time, workload and costs were identified by FE, WBL and AL interviewees as key barriers to meeting individual needs.
 - There were also concerns highlighted by colleges about a lack of continuity and limited funding for CPD from Welsh Government; funding is available on a short-term basis (e.g. annual grants).
- There is also a perceived inconsistency in the availability and quality of CPD, with significant variations between - and within - the types reported.
 - Representatives from FEIs generally held more favourable views on CPD availability than WBL and AL, where there was often but not always considered to be more sporadic provision and a lack of national structures, capacity and expertise to deliver CPD in house.
 - AL/WBL organisations that are aligned to colleges had more favourable views about CPD than those that are not, indicating the positive impact of local partnerships and structures.

These implications are summarised in the table below.

Table 4.2 Strengths and concerns about qualifications and CPD

Strengths	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Broad acceptance that professional learning is of value to achieving improvement and considerable support for this within many institutions. ■ A wide range of qualifications that reflects a range of needs for entry level qualifications to different roles. ■ Some examples of nationally funded and coordinated CPD activity that appears to be well-received and co-produced. ■ Support structures and funding is in place through Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, which can support CPD to increase Welsh medium delivery by practitioners. ■ Providers recognise the need for monitoring practitioner skills for evidence based CPD delivery. ■ Some providers have resources and expertise to support professional learning for their workforce. ■ Some examples of cross-sector collaboration between FEIs and WBL or AL providers. ■ Contractual CPD requirement for FE teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Inconsistent support and availability of opportunities. Levels of expectations around CPD, expertise and capacity to respond differ greatly between (and within) the component parts of the post-16 sector. ■ A plethora of qualifications; many significantly outdated (esp. WBL); some requiring review, reform and rationalisation to reflect current needs and policy; too many to update effectively. ■ No clear and consistent response to professional learning needs (both qualifications and CPD) across the sector. ■ Most CPD designed and delivered in-house; little if any collaboration with other providers in design or delivery. ■ Little systemic CPD response to skills' needs and shortages and progression to leadership. ■ CPD not generally aligned with professional standards. ■ CPD requirement not met for all FE teachers; inconsistent understanding of definition.

5 What can professional learning frameworks offer?

This section examines the experience of other countries' approaches to workforce development for staff working in post-16 further education and vocational education. It also examines other PLFs in Wales covering the school and higher education workforce. It draws on the international literature review and case studies undertaken on approaches to developing and implementing post-16 PLFs in England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia and Ontario (Canada).

These examples, and others in the literature, provide important intelligence for understanding what shapes particular approaches to developing professional development frameworks, what those frameworks look like in practice and the potential impact and applicability of these concepts in Wales.

5.1 Professional development frameworks for post-16 workers in other countries/regions

5.1.1 The purpose of post-16 frameworks

The post-16 PLFs introduced in other countries are varied in scope, structure and content. They are, to a large degree, products of the institutional landscape in which each post-16 sector sits. This is itself a product of historical local factors.

However, there is considerable **commonality in purpose** that transcends structural differences by country. In effect, post-16 professional development frameworks are often trying to do similar things. Any framework that goes beyond a minimalist, compliance-driven set of rules for professional regulation tends to be thematically focused on:

- **Supporting teaching excellence** - by defining what this looks like, as a set of standards, often then translated into areas of competence or higher-order values that serves as a common vocabulary for diverse post-16 sectors.
- **Providing a structure for *individual* continuous professional development** (as a concept linked to professionalism), typically not by mandating *what* or *how* the post-16 workforce should undertake CPD, but by setting out approaches, suggested processes and a means for individuals/organisations to plan and deliver professional development activities.

Frameworks tend to make an **explicit link between excellence, professionalism and improved quality of learning/post-16 outcomes**. In this way, there is a direct relationship to what post-16 sectors are trying to achieve. There are also similarities in the challenges that post-16 sectors are tackling that transcend system differences between countries. There is therefore often a distinctive post-16 or vocational education *flavour* to the frameworks and their associated strategies that goes beyond CPD as a concept and process itself.

Some of this is outward-facing (upskilling and reskilling the population) and some of it is inward-looking (quality, reputation and status of post-16 learning). There is thematic focus apparent in many, if not all, strategies underpinning frameworks on:

- Improving links with employers and the world of work, especially in terms of the clear implications for professional skills, knowledge and competence and in the context of **dual professionalism**. There is resonance here with longstanding

ideas⁵⁰ of vocational teaching professionals facing two directions in terms of teaching and industry expertise, an idea crystallised in the influential Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning (CAVTL) report in 2013 in England, but articulated in slightly different ways in different national contexts.

- Support for **distinctive elements of post-16 teaching that relate to the learner cohort** – its diversity, specific learner groups and, in some cases, on adult learning theory rather than pedagogy. This is sometimes framed in terms of inclusivity or the social purpose of post-16 institutions. It may link explicitly with a specific focus, such as on ensuring that teachers and trainers help learners to develop their key skills, such as maths and literacy.

5.1.2 The scope of post-16 frameworks

While there are thematic similarities, there are key differences in scope between different countries' post-16 professional development frameworks. These are important for considering the parameters of any framework in Wales, and in terms of the applicability of approaches tested elsewhere. Key dimensions to this are:

- **The breadth of the workforce in scope** (i.e. whether the framework focuses specifically on post-16 teachers and trainers or takes a more comprehensive view of the post-16 workforce).
- **The institutional/systemic scope of the framework within education and training** (in terms of whether it is explicitly a post-16 framework or it encompasses other parts of the system, such as schools and higher education).
- **The relationship between professional development and regulation** (in terms of whether, and how, post-16 teachers are regulated. Although this typically relates to qualifications rather than CPD, it can encompass the rules of professional membership bodies in a non-regulated environment).
- **The geographic scope of the framework** (e.g. whether the framework is developed *and implemented* at a national or sub-national level and the connected issue of responsibilities/roles in owning/monitoring the framework).

These points about scope are not just descriptive, contextual points to categorise approaches in different countries, they impact on the ambition and content of frameworks themselves.

1. The breadth of the workforce in scope

In the main, PLFs focus on teachers and trainers (as in England, Scotland, France and many other countries), reflecting, in some case, an emphasis on teaching/pedagogical excellence. The Professional Development Strategy in Ireland⁵¹ is explicitly much more comprehensively based in workforce terms, also encompassing leaders/managers and support staff.

The approach in Ireland reflects that *'all actors within the FET⁵² sector will have a role in the future of FET professional development'*. This approach is rooted in the logic that almost all staff will interact with learners or other stakeholders in some way and therefore contribute to the success of the sector.

The framing of professional development in Ireland is also linked to and driven by **substantial sector change** and an associated ambition to **develop sector identity**.

⁵⁰ PROFF – Professionalisation of VET teachers for the future, CEDEFOP, 2004
http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5156_en.pdf

⁵¹ Further Education and Training Professional development Strategy 2017-2019, SOLAS/ETBI, 2017

⁵² Further Education and Training

Having a framework with a comprehensive workforce scope is arguably better able to articulate a sector reform agenda – because it explicitly acknowledges the role of, say, leaders and organisations in supporting quality improvement.

In Australia, post-16 sector regulation is explicitly framed at the level of registered training organisations (RTOs), which arguably also enables a **whole organisation approach** to professional development. The advantage here is that individual professional development can then be seen as a component of sector quality assurance: *‘The result is a compliance driven national system for quality assurance, which does not include standards for teachers, but audits registered training organisations (RTOs) at the macro level’*⁵³.

Furthermore, having a professional development framework that focuses on teachers and teaching practice does not necessarily mean the role of leadership, management or other non-pedagogical aspects of post-16 excellence is ignored, even though they may be treated separately. The professional standards in Scotland include suites both for teaching and for leadership and management. The Professional Standards⁵⁴ for Teachers and Trainers in England developed in 2014 by the ETF underpin CPD and the qualified (QLTS) professional status managed by the Society for Education and Training. The standards maintain a core focus on values/attributes, knowledge/understanding and professional skills focused on teaching. There is a separate and extensive programme⁵⁵ of leadership development and support developed by the ETF (e.g., over 120 principals and CEOs have undertaken its strategic leadership programme since its 2017 launch⁵⁶), but these form a training offer and are not connected to a wider sector framework.

2. The institutional/systemic scope of the framework within education and training.

The scope of a post-16 framework tends to reflect the design of the national/local system in terms of institutional architecture. This is highly-varied in terms of where post-16 ‘sits’, the levels and types of learning considered to be in scope and how the sector interacts with other parts of the education and training landscape.

In New Zealand, for example, the 2014-2019 Tertiary Education Strategy⁵⁷ sets out priorities for all forms of post-16 education, including higher education. As such, there is a more **prominent focus on interactions between parts of the system** (foundation education, vocational education, community education and higher education) than a distinctive post-16 mission.

Cedefop’s 2016 thematic country reviews on *Supporting Teachers and Trainers for Successful Reforms and Quality of VET* map professional development across EU countries and highlights how a post-16 PLF can be, to some extent, **subsumed within wider policies**. For example, in Hungary, the equivalent post-16 provision is delivered as a subset of schools’ provision, which leads to a situation in which there are *‘very few initiatives to support teachers’ or trainers’ CPD by means of*

⁵³ Dening, Anne, 2018 Building capability in VET teachers, Flinders University, College of Education, Psychology and Social Work

⁵⁴ Achieving professional potential: Professional standards for teachers and trainers in further education and training, ETF, 2014 https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/ETF_Professional_Standards_Digital_FINAL.pdf

⁵⁵ A staged offer including a Middle Managers Programme, Preparing for Principal and CEO Programme, Chief Finance Officers Programme, Chairs Leadership Programme for Principals and CEO

⁵⁶ <https://leadershiphub.etfoundation.co.uk/sites/default/files/PROG-0201-Education%20Training%20Foundation%20%28ETF%29-PRESS.pdf>

⁵⁷ Tertiary Education strategy 2014-2019 Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2014 <https://www.education.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Further-education/Tertiary-Education-Strategy.pdf>

cooperation and partnership between the world of education and the world of work, even though it is a recognised priority⁵⁸.

In France, the strategy for professional development varies considerably depending on the type of institution in which a VET teacher is situated (teachers at national education vocational lycées, trainers at apprenticeship training centres or in-company apprenticeship mentors)⁵⁹. This reflects that even where there is the notion of a coherent post-16 sector, in many cases, this is comprised of disparate silos (e.g. a college-based and a work-based structure), so the notion of a common set of standards or sector purpose may not be a given.

There may also be advantages to incorporating post-16 with other parts of the system. It could support progression within the wider education and training system and ensure equivalence of treatment in relation to qualifications and access to CPD. However, there is little evidence of this being realised in practice, and more evidence of the converse issue of the distinctive post-16 mission being diluted or underplayed.

Where professional development is structured in terms of over-arching domains, principles or high-level competences, there is clearly a **degree of alignment** and the potential for read across between post-16 and schools or higher education teaching. The General Teaching Council of Scotland has different statutory responsibilities with regards to schools and colleges, but it has been able to introduce a suite of professional standards that provide a foundation across both sectors.

3. The relationship between professional development and regulation

The regulatory context for the post-16 workforce is an important factor in whether a formal professional development framework is likely to exist and the scope and status of such a framework. There are examples of CPD frameworks in an unregulated context, such as England, as well as hybrid or evolving models in which strategies for professional development have been introduced that explore the future shape of qualifications and CPD requirements, such as Ireland.

In most cases, there is a strong link between professional regulation and the existence of a professional development framework. This is unsurprising given that regulation is arguably the most powerful lever for implementing a framework. In England, by relative exception, the framework is situated in the context of a practitioner excellence model through a voluntary membership body, the Society for Education and Training. However, the framework here emerged from previously having a regulated model under the FE Teacher Qualifications Regulations 2008.

The challenge for frameworks linked to professional regulation is that they can unduly focus on inputs (e.g. monitoring hours of CPD undertaken, qualifications held). As one 2016 review of the VET teacher workforce in Australia put it, *'as the UK de-regulates, the Australian sector continues to increasingly regulate, complicate and frustrate with little sign of quality improvement'*⁶⁰.

⁵⁸ Bükki, E. et al. (2016). Supporting teachers and trainers for successful reforms and quality of vocational education and training: mapping their professional development in the EU – Hungary. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_HU_TT.pdf

⁵⁹ Centre Info (2016). Supporting teachers and trainers for successful reforms and quality of vocational education and training: mapping their professional development in the EU – France. Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspectives series. http://libserver.cedefop.europa.eu/vetelib/2016/ReferNet_FR_TT.pdf

⁶⁰ Rasmussen (2016), Improving the quality, capability and status of the VET teacher workforce International Specialised Skills Institute, Melbourne

In reality, while regulation is often a powerful driver for introducing a professional development framework, the form and use of such a framework is usually more nuanced and goes beyond statutory requirements. In Cyprus, for example, professional development is structured in terms of teachers undertaking a minimum of 50 hours CPD, but this is framed in terms of ‘research-action methodology’, collaboration and maintaining an educational portfolio⁶¹. There are, to an extent, prescribed actions (undertaking a certain amount of CPD, recording professional development activities), but the focus and content of CPD activities is self-determined within a strategic frame of priorities.

Similarly, in Scotland, post-16 lecturers registered with the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) are required to undertake a professional updating process, including maintaining a reflective professional learning record and evidence of impact. This process is framed explicitly beyond a box-ticking exercise, including enabling teachers to apply for Professional Recognition, which *‘provides an opportunity for a teacher to be recognised as an accomplished practitioner in a particular area, whose practice is underpinned by ongoing reflective enquiry’*⁶².

4. The geographic scope of the framework

The case studies in Ireland, Scotland and England are all examples of national approaches to framework development. The Ontario example, though, shows where responsibility for post-16 CPD has been devolved to state or provincial level.

In Australia, the system is similarly devolved and that, in itself, has led to a perceived gap and the development of a VET capability framework to meet a perceived unmet need and *‘assist the professional development decisions of VET practitioners by enabling them to self-assess their strengths and development needs...using the tools...developed for this purpose’*⁶³. The framework in this case has no particular status and is offered as reference/support to those who want to use it (individual professionals and providers).

In Ontario, strategy relating to FE professional development quite deliberately sits at institutional level as part of a ‘differentiation policy framework for post-secondary education’ (reflecting that each institution is unique and is serving a specific community). However, this does not necessarily mean that there is no professional development framework. There are minimum qualification requirements for teaching, as in Australia, but each college also has a strategic plan, which includes details on enhancing professional development opportunities to develop teaching practice. For example, Canadore College has a Quality Learning, Teaching Innovation department responsible for tracking staff professional development and participation. Other colleges offer a blend of workshops; online learning; teaching with technology and teaching strategies.

5.1.3 Content and structure of frameworks

Variations in scope inform the structure and content of professional development frameworks. However, it is possible to look at core elements to understand what a post-16 framework in Wales might look like. Key dimensions include:

- An over-arching conceptual framework, which may be the professional standards or a set of capabilities, or professional values. The key point is that these are intentionally sector-wide in scope;

⁶¹ Supporting teachers and trainers for successful reforms and quality of VET – Cyprus, Cedefop (2016)

⁶² <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/professional-recognition.aspx>

⁶³ The VET practitioner capability framework Implementation guide, Innovation and Business Skills Australia

- A set of standards which describe competences covering all the post-16 workforce or for each of the groups of staff which show differences in career progression and/or levels of experience and/or areas of expertise;
- Guidance on the professional development process, including example activities and often situated in the concept of reflective practice;
- Supporting tools and materials to help professionals undertake CPD.

In England and Scotland, the professional standards, in effect, define the framework – but they are orbited by a wide range of additional strategies, tools and training opportunities (see Figure 5.1 for an overview of the framework support tools in England). In Ireland, the PLF sits within a wider professional development strategy. It is framed as an action plan to support sector change and explicitly to introduce the infrastructure for future professional development (including the potential development of new Post-16 teaching qualifications).

Figure 5.1 Tools to support implementation of the standards in England

The **Professional Standards Guidance Workbook** includes guidance on how practitioners can access the standards. The workbook also includes a series of tools which practitioners can use to help them think about how they are working towards the standards, and the steps they can take to enable them to continue their professional development⁶⁴.

The **Professional Standards Assessment Tool** enables teachers and trainers to assess and understand how well they currently perform against the professional standards framework⁶⁵. The online tool produces a printable summary including charts that display their self-assessed skills.

The **Professional Standards Research Map** is a tool that has been designed to give quick and straightforward access to research relevant to the sector aligned to the professional standards. The research is available to practitioners in bite sized summaries and in-depth research reports.

In all cases, though, frameworks are designed to be simple, short and clear. The professional development ‘concept’ may combine domains and skill areas visually, as in the Australian VET capability framework, to highlight that the framework is multi-level (see Figure 5.2). It may combine the idea of experience levels and professional development as a process as in Ireland (see Figure 5.3). They are not necessarily prescriptive in nature. In England, for example, the standards can be interpreted by practitioners, and they do not have any references to qualifications or have detailed guidance on how to evidence what is recommended.

The implicit idea that standards are tools for professionals to use over time is an important one. In Scotland, the GTCS Professional Standards explicitly go beyond being a benchmark of teacher competence. This is only the case for the Standards for Registration. The remaining Professional Standards (for Career-Long Professional Learning and Leadership and Management) aim to provide “*constructive support for teachers as they consider how they might develop their professional knowledge and skills through on-going self-evaluation and professional learning*”⁶⁶.

In England, the framework of standards includes three levels or stages as teachers and trainers progress in their career – acknowledging that the degree in which staff

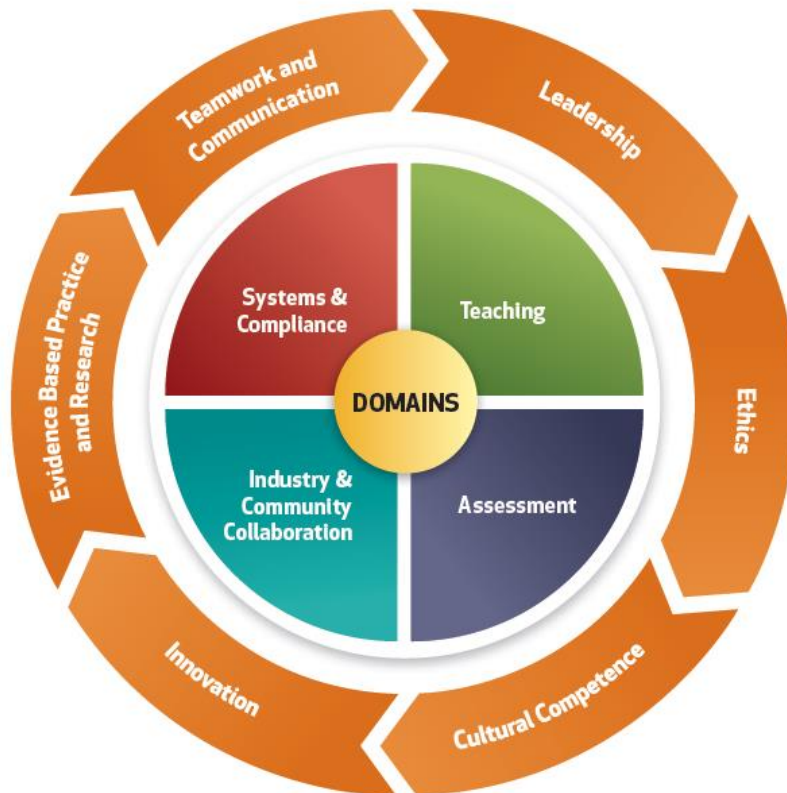
⁶⁴ <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/7386 ETF Workbook FINAL.pdf>

⁶⁵ <https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/digital-assets/self-assessment/>

⁶⁶ <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/files/the-standards/standards-for-leadership-and-management-1212.pdf>

are able to meet these standards will vary. Figure 5.4 shows how different career stages are described in the Australian capability framework. There is a link to the idea of the professional expert in this context, highlighted, for example, through the launch in 2017 in England of a new Advanced Teacher Status (ATS). It is open to those that have already gained Qualified Teacher Learning Skills (QTLS) and have been qualified as a teacher for at least four years: “It provides practitioners with an opportunity to deepen their knowledge and awareness about their own and others practice”⁶⁷.

Figure 5.2 Domains and skills areas in the VET Practitioner Capability Framework in Australia



⁶⁷ <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/uncategorized/how-the-etf-and-set-promote-professionalism/>

Figure 5.3 Professional development as a process and in a career context in Ireland

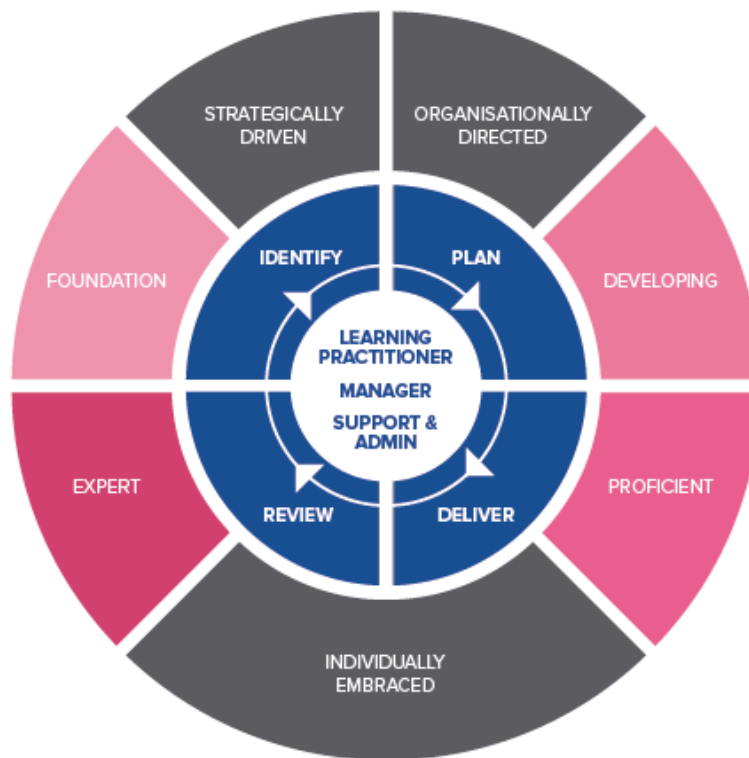


Figure 5.4 Experience-based levels within the Australian framework

Level	Descriptor
First Level Practitioner	Practitioners have a broad theoretical knowledge and practical experience of training and assessment; they operate independently and seek guidance when necessary.
Second Level Practitioner	These practitioners have specialised theoretical knowledge and practical experience of training and assessment; they employ a wide range of teaching and assessment methods and provide guidance and support to practitioners.
Third Level Practitioner	These practitioners have in-depth knowledge and established skills to shape a team's training and assessment practice; they inspire others, lead change processes and provide specialist advice and support.

5.2 Implementation and impact of international frameworks

5.2.1 Drivers for development

While post-16 systems and structures vary considerably by territory, there is a notable commonality in the drivers for introducing a professional development framework. Post-16 sectors are facing similar fundamental challenges and playing a similar role. This translates through to professional development priorities to varying degrees.

At European level, the Riga declaration calls for a systematic approach to CPD for VET professionals and reflects calls seen elsewhere to improve the quality and standing of VET professionals by increasing their opportunities for learning⁶⁸, through introducing ‘*systematic approaches to, and opportunities for, initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors*’. The Riga medium-term deliverables for VET provided some examples of actions that member states might implement on CPD for VET teachers. These cover reviewing FE workforce skills’ gaps in light of labour market needs and providing opportunities to align these, effective partnership with business, and empowering networks that support VET teachers.

More specific drivers for the introduction of new professional development frameworks and stands have included:

- **New institutional structures being set up, driven by a new regulatory approach:** The GTCS teaching standard, introduced in 2013, was prompted by the set-up of the GTCS as the world’s first independent, self-regulating body for teaching⁶⁹ following new regulatory requirements for teachers. While there is no legal requirement for teachers in the FE sector to be registered with GTCS⁷⁰, they do have to adhere to the suite of professional standards. These are underpinned by the themes of values, sustainability and leadership⁷¹.
- **A need for Post-16 sector development following major sector reform:** The FET Professional Development Strategy published in Ireland in 2017 was the culmination of major reforms to amalgamate the previous local Vocational Education Committee (VEC) structure with the separate Training Centre structure to create regional Education and Training Boards, arguably creating a coherent Post-16 sector for the first time. Here the strategy and associated concepts such as the ‘FET Practitioner’ and the conceptual professional development framework set out in the strategy, are part of building a new sector identify as well as improving performance.
- **Wider changes to Post-16 policy and provision, including removing existing regulations, which necessitates a re-think on professional standards:** The framework for QLTS in England was introduced in 2008, alongside Teacher Qualification Regulations that required further education teachers to gain a teaching qualification within a certain number of years. When the regulations were removed, it was recognised that the QLTS model and its associated ‘professional formation’ process remained relevant as a means of supporting quality improvement. The Lingfield Report on Further Education

⁶⁸ European Commission (2015) Riga conclusions 2015 on a new set of medium-term deliverables in the field of vet for the period 2015-2020, as a result of the review of short-term deliverables defined in the 2010 Bruges communiqué. http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/2015-riga-conclusions_en.pdf

⁶⁹ <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/about-gtcs/history-of-GTCS.aspx>

⁷⁰ <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/TeacherJourney/further-education.aspx>

⁷¹ <http://www.gtcs.org.uk/web/FILES/the-standards/standards-for-registration-1212.pdf>

recommended a new framework for professionalisation in the FE sector⁷², which led to review of the existing standards.

5.2.2 Implementation

There is no single model for a Post-16 professional learning framework and, as such, there is no single model to support implementation. There are, though, two important questions that need to be unpacked in order to understand what a programme of support might look like based on how post-16 frameworks have been implemented elsewhere:

- What are the mechanisms for organising support?
- What type of support is actually provided?

Mechanisms for organising support

There are common foundations to any programme of support relating to:

- Ownership – *i.e. who is providing the support*
- Resources – *i.e. who is funding the support where there are cost imperatives*

These ‘mechanisms’, in essence, translate a professional learning framework from being a static document (or suite of documents) to being an active process of professional development or, in some cases, sector transformation.

Ownership

The question of ownership relates to which organisations are responsible for providing support and, by association, *who should do what*. The answer is context-specific to the extent that it often flows out of the institutional landscape and the relationship between professional development and regulation.

Typically, a national ministry or government department (usually for education) will retain authority and will likely be a key source of funding. In a regulated context, a statutory body will maintain other key responsibilities that support implementation of the framework either explicitly or implicitly. The General Teaching Council of Scotland expressly describes its statutory functions (maintaining the teacher register; setting professional standards, accrediting Initial Teacher Education programmes) as being to ‘*promote, support and develop the professional learning of teachers*’.

It is not unusual for PLFs to be described as being ‘sector owned’. This reflects the importance of generating buy-in and tacit support for them at the level of provider organisation and among the teaching workforce. Yet there is a limit to the extent to which ownership can be dispersed. There usually needs to be a lead organisation for implementing professional learning support (a planning, co-ordinating, designing and sometimes a commissioning function) – although this organisation is not necessarily the ministry/government department or the professional regulator.

One of the lessons from other countries is that, beyond narrow statutory functions, responsibilities can overlap between stakeholder organisations, or be interpreted in different ways. The range of stakeholders that may support implementation includes:

- Public agencies (variously responsible for post-16 provision, workforce, quality and qualifications);

⁷² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/422247/bis-12-1198-professionalism-in-further-education-review-final-report.pdf

- Representative organisations (provider bodies, trade unions); and
- Existing networks of providers.

There is not, therefore, necessarily a simple *a priori* answer to the question of which organisation should be responsible for providing support. This is why it is useful to frame the issue in terms of *ownership* – implying that responsibility is something that needs to be explicitly agreed and set out in the context of the framework. This may indicate some form of implementation or action plan that sits alongside the PLF.

The FET Professional Development Strategy in Ireland is a clear example of this approach. In New Zealand, the Tertiary Education Strategy focuses on setting out the roles of various stakeholders from a systems point of view. This approach is especially useful in articulating the division of responsibility between tertiary education organisations (i.e. providers) and national bodies.

Resources

All frameworks are supported, to a degree, with financial resources. Funding is the most straightforward and often the most powerful lever for affecting change. The provision of resources/funding is both a mechanism for organising support and a key area of support provided.

The key distinction is typically between systems under which qualified teachers fund at least part of the professional development activity through membership fees, and systems in which funding for support is more substantially provided by government. The strategic question from a resource-perspective is whether public funding (however it percolates through the system) is considered to be one-off in nature, or if it is considered as an on-going (albeit perhaps evolving) element of implementation. This is an important question to consider upfront, because professional development plans that are intended to be self-sustaining after an initial capacity building phase have a different status to those for which the public investment is longer-term in nature.

Nature of support provided

Typical support provided to implement a post-16 professional development strategy includes:

- Work to develop and/or facilitate **networks of practitioners**. It is common for professional learning frameworks to link with or facilitate professional exchange. Professional exchange within organisations is usually the domain of providers, but this can be complemented with cross-organisational networks or communities of practice based on subject area, type of provision, or role. They may be organised on a regional basis or, if based around virtual exchange, on a national basis. Such networks may precede the introduction of a professional learning framework. Additional support may therefore be aimed at providing a co-ordinating or administrative function that allows these networks to scale up.
- **Capacity building investment** to position the sector, and in particular provider organisations, to better-support workforce development. If the PLF constitutes a step change in workforce CPD then support may take the form of time-limited funds to enable providers to introduce new approaches to professional development (e.g. embedding reflective practice, developing new organisational approaches to advanced practice, ensuring leadership capacity for effective professional learning within the organisation).
- **Design and/or funding of training** or subsidy towards training aligned to PLF priorities. The process of designing a PLF often either crystallises new priorities or uncovers gaps in existing professional development activities. New

qualifications or CPD programmes may therefore need to be developed. This might involve the development of new modules or (as in Ireland) new career pathways supported by training. As such, this investment may be undertaken as a one-off capacity building activity or funded as an on-going activity.

- The development of **tools, materials and resources** to support professional development. This encompasses everything from the visual presentation of the learning framework, guidance for CPD, tools for self-reflection/evaluation and signposting to self-study materials. It may also encompass research on effective professional learning. The reason that these activities often fall within scope of support provided alongside the learning framework is that there is a need for consistency in approach and clear economies of scale in some of these materials being produced at national level.
- **Communications and dissemination** to promote the framework, its associated resources and to inspire the workforce to engage in effective CPD. This can take many different forms but requires an organisation to sit in a co-ordinating role. In some cases, especially where the framework is intended to be transformative, this might include national conferences and/or a programme of seminars to support engagement.

There is a further area of support that needs to be considered in terms of developing and maintaining the **infrastructure** for future professional learning. This can be understood as a cross-cutting, underpinning dimension to support implementation. It encompasses technology, as well as management and review.

For example, there often needs to be some kind of repository for resources, as well as a site to host online learning and support communications and dissemination. The website of the Society of Education and Training (SET), as well as that of its parent organisation, the ETF, acts as a focal for professionals to access a wide range of professional learning support, including information on the process of professional formation and the standards.

Another – less visible – element of infrastructure relates to the management infrastructure for the framework itself, if there is an associated action plan. A clear characteristic of a dynamic framework is that there is an explicit process for review and refresh, sometimes including on-going monitoring and evaluation.

The organisation that ‘owns’ or is responsible for framework review, in effect, owns or manages the framework. An implementation plan can be used as a mechanism for explicitly sharing responsibility for the provision of support. Yet within this, there is a further need for negotiation and brokerage between stakeholders to ensure alignment and on-going co-ordination for implementing the framework if different actors are responsible for different actions.

5.2.3 Impact and success measures

There is relatively little evaluation of professional development frameworks internationally. At first sight, this might seem odd, given that drivers for development are often closely aligned to quality improvement and increasing professionalism. However, it reflects that frameworks are composed of discrete elements that can be monitored in terms of separate elements. There are activity measures associated with take-up and use of standards/qualifications. In these cases, what is being measured is either compliance with standard requirements or the traction and – in some cases – perceived usefulness of the framework itself or associated tools and materials.

Review of the professional development frameworks may also focus on what post-16 professionals find to be most useful. When the authors of the voluntary VET capability framework in Australia *'asked VET practitioners how they would like to use this Framework, they strongly preferred a professional development support approach, rather than the provision of yet more qualifications'*⁷³. In Scotland, the GTCS has found that in 2016/17, the Standards for Career-Long Professional Learning were the most used and were considered to be the most useful of the Standards⁷⁴.

The evidence in England suggests that under its non-regulated model there can be positive self-reported feedback from teachers and tutors who engage with the QLTS process without this necessarily leading a cross-sector transformation in CPD engagement. The Further Education Workforce Data indicated that in 2015/2016, despite a lack of legislation requiring a teaching qualification, most teachers (around three quarters) hold a qualification⁷⁵. An impact assessment of QTLS undertaken in 2015 (prior to the reform of the status) found that 80% of respondents considered that the QTLS had improved their teaching practice, and 84% had increased their confidence in their teaching practice⁷⁶. However, despite the Professional Framework, the Further Education Workforce Data for England for 2015/2016 reported that over 60% of teachers reported spending no time at all on CPD⁷⁷.

In Scotland, under its semi-regulated model, engagement is higher, with 89% of teachers in 2016/17 having used the GTCS Professional Standards to self-evaluate before having a professional development meeting with their manager.⁷⁸ Furthermore, 79% of those surveyed by the GTCS in 2016/17 had gathered evidence of the impact of their professional learning. In the same study, 95% of staff had a Professional Review and Development (PRD) meeting, and 86% of those surveyed felt that the PRD had been used to reflect on and plan for their professional training. In addition, 90% felt to a large/some extent that they had appropriate plans for professional learning and development as a result of the PRD discussion.

5.3 Other professional learning frameworks in Wales

PLFs have been developed for school and HEI staff in Wales. These are described below.

5.3.1 Schools

The schools' workforce has a National Approach to Professional Learning Framework (NAPLF) which has been developed over the last three or four years. It has run in parallel to the development of the new Curriculum for Wales and the review and revision of ITE. The main drivers have been the curriculum reforms which will change what is taught and how it is taught, the huge variation and experience practitioners had of induction and professional learning, both its quantity and quality, and the limited impact it was having.

⁷³ The VET practitioner capability framework Implementation guide, Innovation and Business Skills Australia

⁷⁴ <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/News/teaching-scotland/75-professional-update-annual-evaluation-2016-17.aspx>

⁷⁵ <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/FE-workforce-data-2017-FINAL.pdf>

⁷⁶ <https://set.et-foundation.co.uk/publications/set-publications/qtls-impact-study/>

⁷⁷ <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/FE-workforce-data-2017-FINAL.pdf>

⁷⁸ <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/News/teaching-scotland/75-professional-update-annual-evaluation-2016-17.aspx>

The NAPLF has the following features:

- Professional standards: one set for teaching and leadership, another for teaching support, different from the professional standards for FE and WBL practitioners. These each follow the same format with a set of common values and dispositions, five essential areas of competence, and competence levels (with descriptors and examples to guide users). For example, 'each standard is divided into elements with descriptors that exemplify how the professional standards could apply to a practitioner's work' which can be in turn related to their role and where they are in their career. These have been through a series of developments and co-production to ensure they reflect excellent practice. They are available online and there is interactive material and videos which provide guidance to their use. They are being widely promoted as the basis for individual CPD.
- The expectation that the professional standards inform and influence ITE courses and qualifications, leadership and progression courses and qualifications, CPD training courses at school, network and regional consortium levels, and individual CPD plans. This is intended to ensure a common approach to training and development for students and serving teachers and leaders and one which is largely bottom-up.
- A set of tools and resources which include the PLP, support for schools as learning organisations, online materials and advice on effective collaboration, reflective practice and action research. These broadly encourage practitioners and schools to adopt the appropriate behaviours and provide opportunities for learning.
- A requirement that teachers spend specified working days on CPD activities.
- A National Academy for Leadership in Wales (NAEL) which is expected to provide support for leadership development in schools initially. It is relatively new and to date is funding a group of senior advisors and quality assuring leadership courses.

Additional funding of £15m is currently available in 2019-20 for schools' CPD to prepare for implementing the new Curriculum for Wales. Much emphasis is put on school staff networking to learn and for Pioneer Schools to support other schools learning and development.

For the schools' workforce this sits alongside the EWC acting as the registration and conduct body; local authorities as the employers, and with regional education consortia as the bodies responsible for improvement in the quality of teaching with local authorities and school leaders.

As a PLF, the Schools' workforce framework in Wales has shaped itself to match the needs of the whole workforce and includes all of the ingredients of an effective framework set out above (section 5.1.3) which integrates learning from ITE to leadership. It supports professional development with its standards developed in the same way as those in Ireland and Australia to support improvement and progression, its various tools and materials to give institutions and individuals the help they need on effective processes and approaches, and its detailed guidance to users, all of which is available online.

5.3.2 Higher education

HE practitioner qualifications are accredited by Advance HE, which oversees, regulates, and accredits training for HE practitioners across the UK.⁷⁹ Advance HE has oversight of the professional standards framework for HE professionals which includes four levels of accreditation: Associate Fellow (AFHEA), Fellow (FHEA), Senior Fellow (SFHEA) and Principal fellow (PFHEA).⁸⁰ The framework includes criteria for attaining each level of fellowship which are grouped into three areas: *core knowledge*, *areas of activity* and *professional values*. Applicants can obtain a qualification either by applying directly to the HEA and submitting an evidence-based account supported by referees, or by undertaking an accredited course through a subscribed institution and applying for fellowship through their institution.

In order to obtain a qualification, applicants must demonstrate that they have met certain criteria within each area and/or set number of criteria in each area. The number of criteria needed depends on the level being applied for, and applicants must be contracted to teach a set number of hours over the assessment period. Applicants are assigned a mentor who has already attained a level of accreditation higher than the one they are applying for. The mentor's role is to guide the applicant's development and hold meetings with them throughout the assessment period to discuss their teaching practice. If practitioners are not members of a subscribing institution or choose to apply directly to the HEA then there are application fees ranging from £100-200 for AFHEA to £500-£1000 for PFHEA.

5.4 Implications for the study

It is evident from the development and operation of both formal and unregulated frameworks elsewhere that:

- They reflect country-specific needs but have many common features designed to enhance practitioners' performance on the job and their status;
- Wales has many of the components of a professional learning framework in place already to support training and qualification – professional standards covering most staff and a set of qualifications covering the range of entry points, for example. Many of the post-16 institutions have their own professional learning frameworks;
- Frameworks can draw together common understanding of standards and competences for a workforce group that broadly equates to a labour market, similar to Wales's post-16 practitioners where the quality of work or practitioners' capabilities should be developed to maintain and improve quality;
- Professional standards have been developed further to be used as competences to drive qualifications and CPD in other countries;

Where they have, they have been supported by tools and materials to enable practitioners and their line managers to develop individuals' CPD, courses of formal training, qualifications and progression;

⁷⁹ Advance HE formed when the Higher Education Academy (HEA) merged with the Leadership Foundation and the Equality Challenge Unit in 2018.

⁸⁰ See *UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education* (2011). Available at: <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/downloads/UK%20Professional%20Standards%20Framework.pdf>

- PLFs are often used to enhance practitioners' learning and development and there is some evidence that they do this, with some evidence from the differences between Scotland and England that regulation might increase motivation.

While the Schools' workforce framework in Wales caters for a different and less diverse workforce, it provides many ingredients that would be needed in a PLF for the post-16 workforce. In particular:

- The development of the professional standards so that they cover teaching, leadership and learning support.
- The extension of the standards (well beyond the exemplary material in the appendix to the current standards) to describe competencies/expectations for different experience levels and for their assessment so that they can be used by practitioners and trainers/educators. This should help enormously with their dissemination and usability.
- The availability of on-line resources to support common and effective approaches to CPD ought to help institutions to adopt them and not reinvent the wheel by creating their own. This is also clearly the case in other countries' PLFs.

The provision of online materials for learning and support for learning.

This indicates that the Schools' conceptual framework should be emulated and it has some material which could be adapted for use in a post-16 workforce PLF.

Other countries' PLFs are supported by features which are not found in Wales:

- Collaborative government or sector-led arrangements for providing CPD across the sector developed by the sector through training bodies purposefully established for the post-16 workforce.
- Standards for leadership and management which feed through to training and qualifications.
- Qualification levels which equate to membership/registration levels.

6 Conclusions

This section draws together the key findings from the research summarised in chapters 2-5. It then considers a) what system changes could be beneficial, what they might achieve, and how, and b) how a PLF could support this. The conclusions to this provide some recommendations for moving forward taking account of current resources.

6.1 Key findings: how well is the current system working?

The current system is working well in many respects. These appear to be strengths:

- Broad acceptance that professional learning is of value to achieving improvement and that it is necessary to enhance teaching and development in the workforce;
- Relevant and modern standards in place for most of the sector's practitioners which could be capable of supporting competence based professional learning;
- Local collaboration between FE colleges and HE, business and schools and within sector collaboration in ALPs for the provision of CPD to AL;
- Wide understanding of the skills' shortfalls among some practitioners in most providers with some responding in innovative ways to tackle these;
- Some providers have invested in high quality resources and expertise to support professional learning;
- Support structures and some funding is in place which can support CPD to increase Welsh medium delivery and improve the delivery of higher level qualifications by practitioners;
- A range of entry level qualifications that reflect the range of roles.

Given the development of other education and training workforces in Wales and of other post-16 sector workforces, these appear to be concerns:

- No clear and consistent response to professional learning needs (both for qualifications and CPD) from the sector as a whole;
- No structures (neither qualifications or CPD) which support progression and professional development within the profession after entry;
- Professional standards which are either adjusted for use or little used by the sector to guide CPD while lacking the provision of tools and materials available to practitioners in schools;
- Clearly identified skills' gaps with little systemic CPD response (almost all providers act on their own to define and commission most training);
- Probable gaps in ongoing industry-based knowledge updating for many practitioners and the underpinning pedagogy for vocational education;
- Levels of expectations around CPD, expertise and capacity to respond differ greatly between the component parts of the post-16 sector and within;
- A plethora of qualifications; many significantly outdated (particularly WBL); some requiring greater flexibility (for upskilling);
- Entry qualification standards which apply only to part of the sector and may be out of date/difficult to follow;

- Only lately available data to begin to use for workforce planning; inadequate information about workforce qualifications and training; very limited information on skills' needs to guide sector responses on CPD;
- Little knowledge in the system of the CPD that works as there is little or no evaluation of it; held possibly by a few in a few places;
- A shortage of teachers and assessors with the ability to work through the medium of Welsh, particularly in WBL;
- Insufficient content within teaching qualifications to raise practitioners' awareness of the Welsh-language and their understanding of the needs of Welsh-speaking learners;
- A lack of a national CPD programme for developing the Welsh language skills of WBL practitioners (similar to the Work Welsh scheme for FE and HE, and the Sabbaticals Scheme for schools).

6.2 How could it work better?

6.2.1 What could make it work better

Rationalised suite of workforce qualifications: ensure a family of linked qualifications for different roles/levels between teaching support and institutional management which provide flexible upskilling pathways from different entry levels. This would require Welsh Government, QW and the HEIs to work collaboratively towards this with representatives of the whole sector. This would update all qualifications, provide a better basis for their future updating, make it easier for new entrants, existing staff and recruiters to navigate the system, and provide upskilling opportunities for progression. Consideration could be given to the transferability of these qualifications to schools. At the same time, arrangements for the approval and inspection of FE teaching qualifications could be brought into line with those for school teaching degree and post-graduate qualifications.

Comprehensive teaching qualification requirements: either update the 2002 regulations so that they relate to current/future qualifications and require similar teaching qualifications to be held by teachers in WBL from a date to be specified or bring them into line but use other non-regulatory means to ensure compliance. The former would require a revision of the regulation and changes to WBL contracts. It would ensure all learners had appropriately qualified staff teaching them who recognised the need for CPD.

Professional standards that can be translated into supporting teaching excellence in the post-16 sector: check that the current standards are up to date and ensure that they cover teaching support staff in FE as well; then develop them with descriptors of competences and experience levels (using ETF as a model) to inform qualifications and CPD and disseminate to users. This would require further development work led by a group of practitioners. It would enable the standards to be much better understood and applied, and ensure they are used in much the same way by all users and by all providers across Wales. It would help if they were better distinguished by name and content from the code of conduct.

Collaborative approaches to the development and delivery of commonly needed CPD training: ensure providers develop, commission and deliver training which meets skills' needs/gaps across the workforce collaboratively. This will need to be championed as it is not the way that the sector currently works. This could be helped through the way any government required training programmes are

developed and funded or the SPP is managed in future. Sector-wide training plans also ought to be based on a sector survey of key skills' needs. It should enable economies of scale and improve the quality of training, particularly for specialist training needs. It should also build better relationships between providers in the same geographical areas and across Wales and build links with PGCE delivery centres to ensure the whole sector is well-trained.

A standard requirement for CPD across the entire workforce: extend the requirement for 30 hours CPD to all of the workforce. Providers will need to be encouraged to do this in the short-term. It will help if there is a common definition of what CPD counts towards this, maintaining up to date vocational knowledge is expected by all, and that CPD is recorded using the PLP and a common set of categories. It would ensure equal entitlement and common understanding as well as demonstrate the importance of CPD without fettering the meeting of individuals' needs.

A full declaration of workforce qualifications and skills to EWC: expect providers to support EWC to obtain full information from 99% of the registered workforce. Consideration should be given to requiring the AL workforce to register. The Welsh Government ought to consider how grant agreements and contracts can be used to encourage providers to throw their weight behind this. This will better enable workforce planning, especially the need for ITE and Welsh language skills.

Better understanding of the CPD that works in the sector: draw together what is known about process and impact from experience in Wales and the wider literature and add to it through further research. Learning from current and recent experience should be combined with learning from the evaluative material collected by ETF and other agencies to provide some guidance to providers' design and delivery of CPD in the short-term. This will provide better quality assurance for the formal training which is provided by individual providers and Welsh Government funded programmes.

Welsh language CPD programme encompassing WBL: extend the Work Welsh scheme to WBL. Trained staff are unlikely to be lost to the sector. This will ensure Welsh speaking students in WBL are not disadvantaged.

Tools and resources for the whole workforce and all providers: begin to establish tools and resources relevant to the sector starting with adapting those available to the schools' workforce, such as on effective collaboration and networking, reflective practice and action research. Their use will need to be promoted. This could also include developing online/blended learning as hwb is developed for the sector.

Once some of these changes were implemented, other less urgent actions could be considered. These should include:

- Accrediting progression training and CPD. This would ensure formal training which is valued by providers can be recognised by the sector and transferred between providers. It would help with progression to managerial roles in providers. As a start current accreditation would need mapping.
- NAEL offering PCET leadership course guidance as it has begun to do for the schools sector. This would alleviate providers from identifying such courses and should be considered alongside the potential development of separate professional standards for leaders and managers.
- Improving data available for planning and monitoring. As a start the HESA data on ITE in FE courses ought to be published. In time better forecasting workforce

needs could come from modelling using recruitment/retention data from providers to supplement registration data.

6.2.2 What would help to make this happen?

There are a considerable number of levers available to the Welsh Government. As set out in chapter 2, the Welsh Government has the ability to legislate so it can amend regulations, such as those for FE teaching entry qualifications with or without further regulation, and require FE colleges, local authorities and WBL providers to make improvements to the training and development of the workforce. It can authorise Estyn to check on this.

The Welsh Government can also, if it wishes, redirect the funding it has available for supporting PGCE PCET students and for Sector Skills Priorities. There is no evaluation of the benefit of either of these funds although the former clearly gives higher grants to STEM teaching areas which match skills' shortages identified. And the Welsh Government could amend regulations around registration to require practitioners to demonstrate they have undertaken CPD and acquired teaching qualifications.

It is clear from the literature as well as from the sector conversations that while regulation and top-down direction may help in a few places, a co-produced approach to making changes to qualifications, entry standards and CPD as outlined above would be more likely to be achieved with consent and the willing participation of a cross section of the workforce, building on what is done well within the sector.

However, developing a sense of cross-sector working and collaboration may be difficult to achieve given the independence of the FE colleges and the distinctions made between staff groups even within providers.

Consequently, the Welsh Government would need to consider providing a direction of travel and some funding to expedite progress and ensure it is sustained.

6.2.3 How could a PLF for the post-16 workforce help to achieve a better system?

A PLF should not stop good practice in providers nor be a burden to institutions or individual practitioners. It is more of a concept that can wrap around the components of professional development (capability, behaviours, opportunities and impact) with various degrees of regulation by government, which together can provide a framework for improvement.

In Wales PCET is not undergoing such a high degree of reform compared to schools but it is faced with multiple challenges that the workforce has to absorb and deliver and a workforce that has to replace itself largely through the recruitment of experienced vocational experts without teaching experience. This requires an adaptable workforce and one that requires continuous high levels of professional development. Practitioners and institutional managers tell us this too. It also requires a workforce with a higher profile and recognition. This is not the case at present.

In such circumstances, a PLF could support this and provide a framework for many of the changes set out above to make the system better. A PLF for PCET practitioners in Wales could:

- Bring together all of those things which are known to enhance practitioner development through their careers and ensure they are timely, relevant and valued;

- Bring together practitioner and institutional understanding of what enhances workforce development and its high priority;
- Be built around the CPD entitlement and the professional standards and their development which are the bedrock of practitioner development;
- Build the sector's identity as a profession to support recruitment and retention and for professional development to support progression and continuous improvement;
- Enable a sector response to qualification development and common CPD needs;
- Begin to create a PCET workforce that identifies with Wales and is working as one;
- Provide better value for money through reduced duplication of effort in relation to qualification development and the provision of CPD.

As indicated above the Welsh Government could create and oversee this concept. While it may need to regulate to require providers/individual practitioners to meet certain standards and want to see whether changes to CPD requirements, CPD delivery and entry qualifications make a difference, it should not need to own the professional standards and the resources to support their use and effective delivery of CPD.

In some ways the planned CTER could be an appropriate body to own the professional standards and meet some of the sector's needs for CPD. However this might not sit well with its role as a funding body for PCET while the EWC is responsible for improving and maintaining standards of professional conduct and 'contributing to the standards of teaching'⁸¹. It would not be unusual for a body such as EWC to be responsible for these as they are in other sectors (e.g. social care in Wales, social work in England) and in other countries (e.g. teachers in Scotland). Even so this does not mean it would necessarily be an appropriate body to meet some of the sector's needs for CPD. The sector's workforce may not feel much ownership of what is provided if it were managed by either a policy/funding body or a registration body. An independent training organisation managed and funded by the sector, such as can be found in various states of Australia for FE and in Wales for HE, may be more appropriate. Such a body could be self-managed by the sector and established with close links perhaps to an HEI.

With the development of the CTER over the next four years, it would be premature to identify precise organisational solutions at this point. The immediate actions can be taken forward alongside the implementation of the CTER.

6.2.4 What are some of the potential blockages?

Stakeholders and interviewees referred to some system features which could affect the pace and direction of change. These included:

- Grading and job titling for many roles in FE and WBL which are set out in agreements with Trade Unions with links to pay scales and in some cases qualifications;
- Funding and capacity to enable changes to be made both within Welsh Government and the sector;
- The distinction between FE and WBL, even though many FE colleges employ WBL practitioners, when a cross-sector collaborative endeavour is required here.

⁸¹ Principal aims of the EWC as described in the Education (Wales) Act 2014

There are others which the research has identified:

- The post-16 sector lacks an infrastructure, a body with expertise and specific responsibility, to support and possibly provide professional learning. Schools have the regional education consortia; the post-16 sector in England has the ETF, for example;
- The post-16 sector has mixed views on whether they want to collaborate (over resources, CPD, qualifications) and see the benefits. FE colleges appear to be keen to maintain their autonomy to meet their own needs for professional learning, whereas WBL and AL providers see the wider benefits.

6.3 A way forward

6.3.1 Recommendations to Welsh Government

Drawing on the above, we would propose that the Welsh Government should:

1. Enable a sector-led Professional Learning Framework to be developed on the established principles of co-production;
2. Provide the direction of travel for the PLF and a vision of the concept;
3. Establish expectations that the PLF will build on and use the professional standards, and that it will encompass standards for professional learning provision which cover all the workforce supporting teaching and for individual participants in the workforce to practise and progress;
4. Take steps with QW and the HEI providers to rationalise the qualifications used and revise key qualifications to bring them up to date and ensure flexible delivery; modify the PCET PGCE to become a minimum entry qualification for teaching roles throughout the sector;
5. Consider revising and clarifying the regulation of qualifications for entry to the sector alongside the revision and rationalisation of the qualifications **or** provide guidance to providers as part of the PLF;
6. Take steps to adjust arrangements for the approval of teaching qualifications and the quality assurance of the courses to bring them into line with those for schools;
7. Review the effectiveness and value for money of the PGCE PCET funding which currently provides grants for students enrolled on full-time courses provided at four universities;
8. Develop new collaborative approaches to the development of CPD provision across the sector; identify a champion to establish a 'train together, train for Wales policy' within the sector for CPD;
9. Seek representatives of the sector to review the professional standards so that they can be used for the development of qualifications, CPD training and individual training and development plans (for all staff who teach or support staff who are teaching including leaders and managers), and develop resources along the lines of those provided by the ETF so that they can be better used;
10. Consider changing the name of the professional standards so they are better distinguished from the standards for registrants along the lines of those in Scotland which are standards for career-long professional learning;
11. Commission a sector survey of key skills' needs;

12. Seek a commitment from ColegauCymru and NTfW that their members will provide all staff at least 30 hours of CPD a year (pro rata for part-time) and support the PLP once CPD has been commonly defined;
13. Support the development of a common definition of CPD and a set of categories for recording;
14. Urge providers to support EWC's efforts to have full information on all registrants and set a target for this to be achieved in EWC's grant letter;
15. Understand better what CPD works in Wales and ensure this informs the design and delivery of training across the post-16 sector;
16. Consider the most appropriate structures for leading and directing the PLF as the arrangements for establishing the CTER take a clearer shape.

6.3.2 Recommendations for other bodies

Education Workforce Council:

17. Continue efforts to have full information on all registrants;
18. Continue to encourage and monitor usage of the PLP.

Qualifications Wales and HEI providers of PCET degrees:

19. Work together with the sector, where appropriate, to reformulate qualifications to better meet the sector's needs and provide upskilling pathways.

Post-16 providers:

20. Support the Welsh Government's intentions to improve the standards of the post-16 workforce;
21. Work together to reform qualifications, build on the professional standards and provide better quality CPD;
22. Commit to provide all staff with at least 30 hours of CPD a year;
23. Support the development of a common definition of CPD and a set of categories for recording;
24. Support EWC's efforts to have full information on all registrants.

6.3.3 Next steps for the Welsh Government and the post-16 sector

In the period leading up to the functioning of the CTER in April 2023, the following actions should be prioritised with the resources available:

2019-20 and 2020-21

The Welsh Government should indicate its support for and vision of the concept of a PLF and provide guidance on the direction of travel for the professional development of the post-16 workforce including aspirations, such as for entry qualification levels, and for the role of the sector in shaping this through greater collaboration and cooperation.

The Welsh Government should provide some leadership and research support to enable the sector-led activities proposed on standards and resources to be taken forward to enable their greater use for CPD.

Qualifications Wales and HEIs should take forward action on the qualifications review with the Welsh Government establishing responsibility for the approval of the

degree level qualifications with EWC and completing a review of the PCET grant funding.

2021-22 and 2022-23

The Welsh Government should champion increasing collaboration within the sector and support a workforce sector survey of skills' needs, in order to build a consensus on skills to be developed together and any accredited training required.

The bodies representing the different groups of the workforce (ColegauCymru, NTfW and WLGA) should be requested by the Welsh Government to seek support from all providers for 30 hours minimum CPD for all staff. Providers should collaborate to agree to definitions of CPD.

The Welsh Government should consider whether it should update the teaching regulation setting minimum qualification requirements for FE teachers or use the PLF to specify an expectation which all providers would adhere to.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 Strategic priorities identified by Welsh Government

Strategic priorities to be reflected in post-16 professional learning framework as stated in tender specification

Skills

- Ensuring an adequate supply of practitioners qualified to effectively deliver technical learning and apprenticeships at Levels 3, 4 and 5.
- Consideration the feasibility and practicalities of 'converting' existing practitioners to deliver qualifications at higher levels.
- Opportunities for post-16 practitioners to develop and update their vocational/industry/subject and pedagogical skills.
- Building capacity in the post-16 workforce to effectively deliver Essential Skills Wales qualifications, and to integrate literacy, numeracy and digital literacy seamlessly into curriculum delivery.

Post-16 pedagogy

- Developing a distinctive, shared vision for what constitutes 'excellence' in post-16 learning delivery, particularly in vocational settings.
- Effective integration of 'on the job' and 'off the job' training, including accreditation of prior learning.
- Use of self-reflection, action research and peer support to enhance post-16 learning delivery and build up an evidence base on effective practice. We aim to instil a culture of research-informed practice, which will pose challenges as there is far less research on post-16 pedagogy than in the schools' sector. We anticipate that the scoping study will start to identify significant gaps and priorities for future research in this area.
- The scoping study should consider how the EWC's Professional Learning Passport can be embedded as an effective tool to plan, record and reflect on professional learning across the post-16 sector.

Differentiated learning

- Upskilling practitioners to use differentiated learning techniques to meet the diverse needs of post-16 learners at all levels and of all abilities, and to ensure that learning is sufficiently challenging.
- This should, for example, reflect the requirements of the Welsh Government's [More Able and Talented guidance](#) for the further education sector and the [Additional Learning Needs Transformation programme](#).

Learner resilience and wellbeing

- Upskilling practitioners to support learners to develop the attitudes and capabilities that they need to succeed and progress in their learning.
- This should include independent learning and organisational skills, as highlighted, for example, in Estyn's recent [thematic review of A level provision](#).

Digital learning

- Improving practitioners' skills and confidence to use technology effectively to deliver digital and blended learning.
- Consideration of how digital learning should be integrated into the PGCE FE and other practitioner qualifications.

Welsh-medium and bilingual learning

- Developing practitioners' skills to deliver Welsh-medium and bilingual learning in all types of settings.
- The relationship between the professional learning framework and activity undertaken by the National Centre for Learning Welsh in the Welsh for Adults sector.