



# Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales

Delivering Skills that Work for Wales



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## Delivering Skills that Work for Wales

- Audience** Maintained Schools; Further Education Institutions; Higher Education Institutions; Local Education Authorities; fforwm; Estyn; Higher Education Funding Council for Wales; Unions; Professional Associations; Welsh Local Government Associations; Quality Assurance Agency; Equality and Human Rights Commission; Welsh Language Board; Faith Communities Fora; Sector Skills Councils; Work-Based Learning Training Providers; 14-19 Network Representatives; Welsh for Adults Centres; Wales Council for Voluntary Action; The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education; The Association of Directors of Education in Wales.
- Overview** A key priority for the Welsh Assembly Government is to secure a workforce that is sufficiently skilled to access future high level employment opportunities. Evidence suggests that to help achieve this, the Assembly Government should seek ways to more fully integrate the work of schools, Further Education Institutions, Higher Education Institutions and other post -16 providers to transform the ways in which education and training provision is delivered.
- Action required** The Assembly Government expects learning providers to take the necessary steps to form geographic and sectoral Learning Partnerships by November 2008, with the submission of outline proposals for change, as a Strategic Outline Programme, submitted to DCELLS, by 15 January 2009 (Annex B). Responses should be made on the enclosed proforma and returned electronically to Transformation3@wales.gsi.gov.uk or in hard copy to the address below.
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<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/?lang=en>
- Related documents** One Wales  
The Learning Country: Vision into Action  
Promise and Performance  
Skills That Work for Wales Strategy  
14-19 Learning Pathways  
Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2008 (Proposed)

## MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

We live in a world that demands a highly skilled workforce and recognise that the acquisition of skills and getting a job are two of the most powerful ways in which individuals from all backgrounds can transform their life chances. This means that our education and training system must cater for the needs of learners and the demands of employers if we are to equip and prepare people for employment. Further it must engage young people who have disengaged from school and those young people and adults who have not participated in learning for some time.

In addressing the need to create a well-skilled nation we welcome the progress that has already been made since devolution. Education and training is improving. Estyn highlights improvements in the quality of learning provision across all sectors. We have achieved higher employment levels than many European countries. Opportunities available to young people are increasing as a consequence of the 14-19 Learning Pathways programme. There are examples of excellent collaborative developments between learning providers that give benefits to many young people and adults.

However, Wales still has a lower employment rate and higher proportion of adults without qualifications, than the UK average. 10% of our young people are not in education, employment or training. Basic skills deficiencies are still a major cause for concern. Too many schools, colleges and universities plan and deliver in isolation, leading to duplication and gaps in provision. As a consequence, access to high quality education and training is inconsistent and too few learning providers take account of the demands of business and industry and the diverse range of learner needs.

In both our *One Wales* programme and *Skills that Work for Wales* strategy, we set out how we intend to meet these challenges.

We recognise in *One Wales* that education brings empowerment and a learning culture helps to achieve social justice. We also acknowledge the importance of a strong and enterprising economy and the benefits to be gained when jobs are created and retained. This is why we are taking forward a number of united initiatives to transform learning delivery. The Learning and Skills Measure is an essential component of our transformation programme. This aims to underpin 14-19 entitlement through provider collaboration and networking.

*Skills that Work for Wales*, our strategy to develop skills and employment for young people and adults, sets out the actions we intend to take to generate sustainable economic growth in all parts of Wales. A key priority of the strategy is to ensure that all learning delivery, from the age of 16, is fundamentally reshaped, reconfigured and transformed so that all delivery is harmonised. However, we also recognise that some local authorities will wish to co-ordinate the transformation of post-16 learning provision with implementing 14-19 entitlement and plans to reorganise post-11 delivery in secondary schools. We are supportive of such synchronised activity being progressed where it will raise pupil attainment and ensure that our education and training system has the right structure and capacity to deliver the skills of the future.

To realise a just Wales, where everyone has a chance to succeed, we must secure improvements. I am pleased therefore to introduce our policy and proposals for transforming learning, which sets out the actions we will take to secure effective, efficient and responsive learning delivery. We acknowledge the challenges implicit in implementing this policy. Our expectations are high but achievable, radical but realistic. It is crucial that we work together to urgently transform education and training.

Many of you are already embarking upon this transformation agenda. We are working closely with some groups of learning providers, who are well advanced in their transformation planning and confidently expect to see the implementation of significant change by 2010. I commend these developments and invite all strategic leaders and learning providers to investigate the most appropriate ways of addressing the skills agenda in the very near future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Griffiths', written in a cursive style.

**John Griffiths AM - Deputy Minister for Skills**

## Overview

Our new skills strategy, *Skills that Work for Wales*, and the Learning and Skills legislation in the National Assembly of Wales, which deals with the entitlement of all 14-19 students to a wide range of curriculum options, require new ways of working across the network of providers in Wales.

This paper challenges everyone involved in the management and provision of post-compulsory education and training in Wales to work together to transform the network of providers so that we:

- widen the options available for students at 14-19 in a way that prepares young people for the full range of pathways open to them and that respects the different learning styles of those students;
- reduce unnecessary duplication of provision by increased levels of collaborative curriculum planning and delivery; and
- move to excellence across networks of providers, building on the progress made by individual providers in raising the quality of institutional management and of students' learning experience.

Such transformation requires a fundamental change of approach across Wales and will be supported by new policy developments in areas such as the funding of post-16 provision, as signalled in *Skills that Work for Wales*. We want to ensure that providers plan their provision collaboratively to meet the needs of learners, employers and communities – and to ensure that as much of the available resources as possible are used for teaching and learning and learner support.

This paper proposes a national framework to support the transformation of the provider network in Wales and invites proposals to be submitted that respond to the need for change. We have very deliberately designed the national transformation framework to encourage local solutions to local needs, rather than apply a one-size-fits-all model across Wales. The framework also recognises that discussions between providers on new ways of working together are already happening around Wales – we warmly welcome these initiatives.

In the case of secondary schools, we recognise that some local authorities have embarked on, or are considering, proposals for reconfiguration of secondary provision, for example to respond to the challenges presented by surplus places. We would be keen to have discussions with those authorities to ensure that we can work together to ensure that such proposals also link to transformation of post-school provision in the area.

We have set ambitious timelines in this paper, partly because a number of areas of Wales have themselves been ambitious in seeing the need for change, and partly because the status quo will not deliver our shared goal to build a highly-educated, highly-skilled, high-employment Wales. We look forward to working with local authorities and all post-16 providers to build a provider network that will achieve that goal.



# Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales

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# Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales

## Introduction: Statement of Intent

1. *One Wales*<sup>1</sup> sets out the Welsh Assembly Government's plans to ensure learning for life, to create a fair and just society and to ensure a sustainable environment. It further describes our resolution to develop an education and training system that offers a broad range of learning opportunities, is responsive to the needs of all learners and employers, and tackles poverty and disadvantage.
2. Consequently, a key priority of the Welsh Assembly Government is to improve learner outcomes, reduce economic inactivity and improve skill levels of those in employment. In short, the Assembly Government has pledged to transform learning provision and delivery. The aim is to secure a workforce that is sufficiently skilled to access future high level employment opportunities.
3. The Assembly Government acknowledges the progress made by many of our individual learning providers, and groups of providers over the last few years. These include provider networking and partnership planning to secure improved choice for 14-19 year olds; improvements in attainment and progression; and improvements in the quality of provision, as referenced by Estyn. We have seen the emergence of innovative solutions to local delivery challenges and note the strong link between successful learner delivery and outcomes, with sustained provider collaboration.
4. However, we are fully aware that improvements are not consistent across Wales at all levels of delivery and are clear that the pace of network change is insufficient to make the improvements to learning that are required. We conclude that still more can be achieved if models of good provider practice are shared, replicated and modified to meet local circumstances; and there is a shared commitment to eliminate duplication of provision and inefficiencies.
5. Therefore, a fundamental message of our new *Skills that Work for Wales*<sup>2</sup> (StWfW) strategy and action plan is that the current arrangement of learning provision is unlikely to support the learning transformation that Wales demands, and this analysis is underpinned by the independent review of Further Education in Wales<sup>3</sup>.
6. The Assembly Government is committed to a firm focus on securing more effective provider collaboration. This has led to the development of the proposed Learning and Skills Measure, to underpin 14-19 entitlement. This will ensure that all learners in this important target group are able to access a wide range of good quality learning programmes, which cannot be achieved by any single education or

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<sup>1</sup> One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Skills That Work for Wales: A Skills and Employment Strategy and Action Plan, 2008 - available at: [http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy\\_strategy\\_and\\_planning/skillsthatworkforwales/?lang=en](http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy_strategy_and_planning/skillsthatworkforwales/?lang=en)

<sup>3</sup> Promise and Performance: The report of the Independent Review of the Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales in the context of the Learning Country: Vision into Action. December 2007, the Webb Review.

training provider, and obtain the support needed to maximise the chances of successful outcomes.

7. We believe that the focus on provider collaboration and networking should not be restricted to the 14-19 target groups. We intend to work with providers and stakeholders to comprehensively address provider structure, function and networking potential to help increase the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of education and training for all learners beyond the age of 16; and fully to support local authorities that wish to progress associated reorganisation of post-11 learning delivery<sup>4</sup>. We expect this to result in more cross-sector networking between and across all provider sectors; more university and college mergers; and more post-16 tertiary arrangements.

8. We are not convinced that any one specific collaboration or reconfiguration model can deliver the transformation of post-16 education and training provision. Consequently, the commissioning consortia proposal put forward in the Webb Review is not a model which we wish universally to prescribe. However, we are aware that this model may be the most appropriate in specific circumstances, particularly where specialist providers work over a wide geographic area. The StWfW consultation responses recorded similar stakeholder concerns about the tenability of this model, whilst accepting that the status quo is no longer acceptable to deliver the modern skills agenda.

9. For ease of reference we are calling the wider provider networks/collaborative models the Assembly Government envisages emerging from this policy, **Learning Partnerships**. As a minimum we expect these Learning Partnerships to be established for the period of time it takes to develop and implement specific transformation. In addition, for some collaborative models, stakeholders may consider the Learning Partnership as the most appropriate management body, in which case the Learning Partnership will become the central core for learning delivery.

10. As part of the StWfW consultation, there was a call for the Assembly Government to provide clear leadership in the direction and pace of change. With this in mind, we have therefore decided not to pilot limited transformation activity, but to roll out the full programme immediately.

11. In taking forward our transformation policy, we expect local authorities to work together, to focus on harmonising the delivery of Adult Community Learning, with better links to voluntary sector delivery; and where appropriate make plans for secondary school, and school sixth form reorganisation. Statutory proposals should be brought forward on the basis of improving standards; increasing participation; improving the range of opportunities for learners; taking account of surplus capacity; the increasing demand for Welsh-medium provision; reducing the number of small sixth forms; and maximising investment of available funds in the school building stock.

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<sup>4</sup> On this basis the document occasionally references changes that might be proposed if some local authorities wish to harmonise pre and post-16 reorganisation in response to the transformation policy.

12. Local authorities should also focus on meeting the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure to provide a full choice of academic, vocational and skill-based programmes and pathways. In doing this local authorities should work with the relevant further education and work-based learning providers to ensure that 14-19 learning programmes are delivered in a coherent manner.

13. We will require further and higher education institutions and work-based learning providers to continue to concentrate on working with 14-19 Networks to fulfil the requirements of expanding local opportunities for all, and to work together to create and expand much needed progression routes. They should collaborate to establish regional networks of post-16 and post-19 skills specialisms, based on sector priorities; set up skills centres of excellence where appropriate; launch appropriate foundation degrees; and merge or form formal federations<sup>5</sup> where this will maximise learner benefits.

14. In addition, the Assembly Government will focus on the quality and number of work-based learning providers. Specifically, we wish to see the development of apprenticeships and programmes to assist people into work, to ensure that these valuable learning routes play a full role in the creation of learning provision that is fit for purpose and makes the best use of available resources.

15. We expect relevant local authorities and further and higher education institutions, working with officials from the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (DCELLS), to take the lead on swiftly achieving the transformation we seek. Where plans involve schools and school sixth forms the local authority will be the most appropriate body to take the lead. In other circumstances a specific college or university will be better placed to direct and manage transformation.

16. With the exception of work-based learning providers, this may involve a long term commitment to the joint management of provision or new shared governance arrangements<sup>6</sup> will need to be put into place. Some local authorities will only achieve the expected learning delivery improvements by reorganising/reconfiguring learning provision. This might result in local authorities bringing forward statutory proposals to reorganise secondary schools, if post-11 reorganisation forms part of the local transformation plan; and statutory proposals to close school sixth form, with the establishment of post-16 tertiary arrangements with local colleges. Further education colleges may wish to consider more formal collaborative measures, including mergers, or formal federations, with other further and higher education institutions. Higher education institutions may also wish to improve their current partnership arrangements.

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<sup>5</sup> In this context the word "federation" is used to refer to formal collaboration or partnerships which provide similar learner benefits to the merger of individual institutions without providers formally integrating.

<sup>6</sup> This may be achieved by:

- The Collaboration between Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2008, with the formation of joint committees.
- The Collaboration (Maintained Schools and Further Education Bodies) (Wales) Regulations 2008, with the formation of joint committees. These regulations are expected to come into force in December 2008.

17. In establishing a transformed pattern of learning provision in Wales the Assembly Government is committed to work with external stakeholders in a way that balances national strategy with local needs and experiences drawn from best practice.

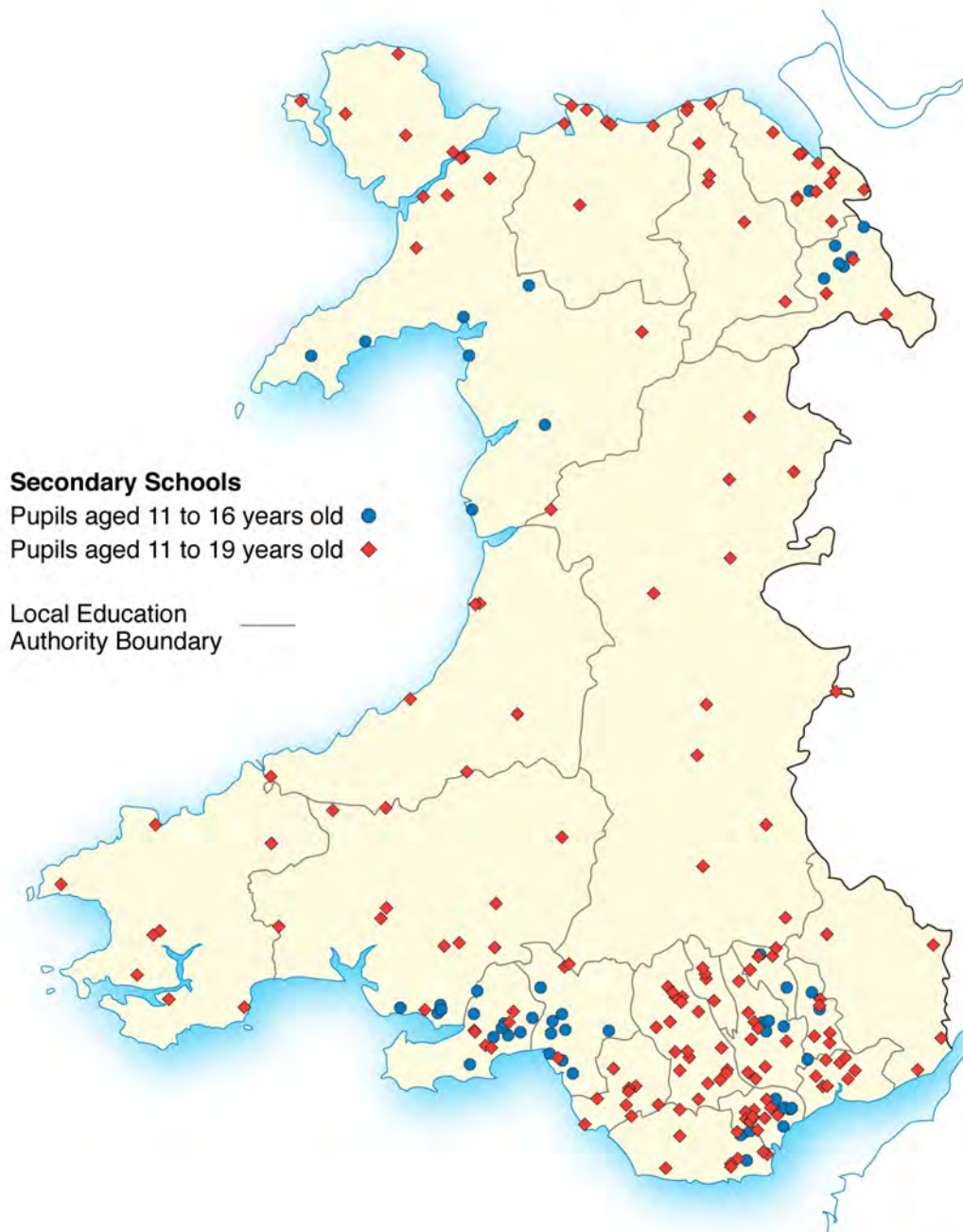
18. Specifically we expect all learning transformation to improve opportunities available to people and groups who are more likely to experience discrimination and have access to fewer opportunities. Learning transformation should also demonstrate the effective use of Information Learning Technology and Information Communications Technology and the role these play to support transformation.

19. Finally we recognise that several local authorities, colleges and universities are already well advanced in their plans to transform education and training provision, to meet the needs of learners, and we will continue to work with these stakeholders to implement such plans in a timely manner.

### **Background: Underpinning Factors**

20. Currently publicly-funded secondary education and training provision in Wales is provided by 222 maintained secondary schools (excluding special schools), 168 of which have sixth forms. Of these, 55 schools deliver provision through the medium of Welsh and 48 of these have sixth forms. This provision is administered through 22 local authorities. In addition provision is delivered by 25 further education institutions. The geography, demographics and socio-economic landscapes of delivery vary considerably across Wales. In addition, we currently contract with 91 work-based training providers; and each local authority area has an allocation of funds to deliver Adult Community Learning.

# Secondary Schools in Wales



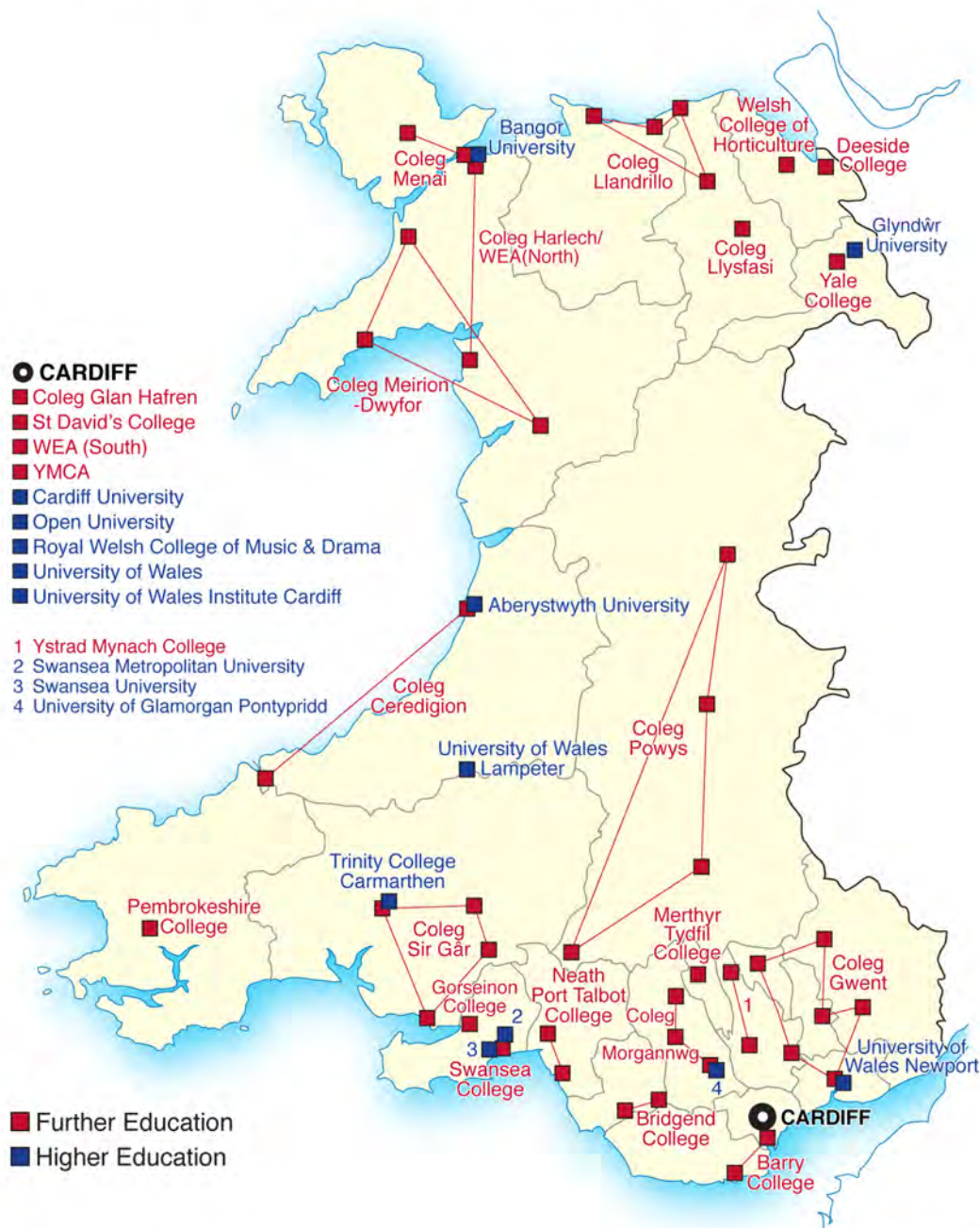
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Cartographics : ML/23/08.09/education (4)

21. Within each geographic area the majority of provision has traditionally been planned and delivered individually within schools and further education institutions, together with some voluntary and work-based learning programmes and, where appropriate, higher education provision. On a national and regional basis, the 25 further education institutions have established some strong sectoral partnerships and other mutually beneficial collaborative arrangements in addition to their local remit.

22. Finally the 13 higher education providers in Wales form part of a UK-wide network, offering higher-level provision, with world-wide access. The overarching remit covers foundation, first and higher degrees; Access programmes; and other national and bespoke training provision. In addition universities undertake valuable research programmes that are essential to the future of Wales and have established some good collaborative links with other universities and further education colleges.

## Further & Higher Education in Wales



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Cartographics : ML/23/08.09/education (3)

However, there is more scope for universities to play a further role in a fully integrated learning network. This will involve the development of more university and college links; a focus on expanding much needed vocational and skill-based progression routes; developing specialisms; and the establishment of clear entry and exit points for all post-18 learners. The refresh of *Reaching Higher*, the Assembly Government's ten-year strategy for higher education, is to be progressed in the context of this agenda<sup>7</sup>.

### **The Case for Change**

23. Notwithstanding the improvements to provider delivery there is substantial evidence to show that there are too many small school sixth forms and, in a few areas, too many secondary schools. In addition, there is a large number of further education and work-based training providers in Wales and rationalisation would help strengthen strategic management, improve efficiency and better meet current and future demand for relevant high quality education and training delivery<sup>8</sup>.

24. The current delivery of education and training provision is inefficient in terms of the upkeep of excess school buildings; unnecessary 16-19 duplication of provision between schools and between schools and colleges; restricted choice for many learners; too many small post-16 classes in schools; and in some cases surplus places 11-16. This leads to valuable education and training funds being directed towards additional staff costs and infrastructure investment when they would be better directed at the learners and the learner experience<sup>9</sup>. In addition, Estyn reports that small class sizes found in many school sixth forms leads to limited student interactions which diminishes the effectiveness of learning.

25. Where providers are collaborating to reduce inefficiencies and improve effectiveness of provision, learner opportunities and student interactions increase. This is the case, for example, in Caerphilly, South Wales, where seven schools and the local college have a shared post 14-19 curriculum offer. This delivers in excess of 80 learning programmes for the post-14 cohort and clear progression routes; specialist and consistent high quality teaching and learning experiences for post-16 learners; and good value for money provision. The collaborative arrangement is reviewed to ensure year-on-year improvements and the local authority and college are committed to further evolving the partnership arrangements over time to take account of the needs of learners and the skills and employment needs of the local community.

26. Providers who are based in part of the Heads of the Valley area are developing other means to transform education and training delivery. Merthyr Tydfil Further Education College merged with the University of Glamorgan in 2006, to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery and to better engage with

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<sup>7</sup> *Reaching Higher, A Strategy for Higher Education in Wales, 2002*. This strategy is to be refreshed in the light of 'Skills that Work for Wales' priorities and education transformation policy to ensure that there is a joined up approach to addressing economic performance and social inclusion.

<sup>8</sup> Statistical and Financial information related to learning provision is given in Annex A.

<sup>9</sup> It is, however, recognised that there are particular problems in some rural areas and for Welsh-medium schools which are geographically distant from other Welsh-medium providers. Here, the issue of cost-effectiveness has to be considered in terms of the overall benefits for learners.

work-based learning providers and employers. In Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent there are long-standing plans to link all local post-16 provision, including access to higher level programmes of learning, through the establishment of Lifelong Learning Campuses. The business cases for these proposals are expected shortly. In the same geographic area, higher and further education providers have a desire to establish a University of the Heads of the Valley and the Universities of Newport and Glamorgan are investing heavily in planning this innovative solution to low higher education participation.

27. In February 2008 Yale and Deeside Colleges publicly announced their intention to undertake a feasibility study into the potential for future collaboration and partnership in North East Wales. Coleg Llysfasi has subsequently become a partner and the feasibility study will explore ways in which the three colleges can collaborate to further improve the education and training offered to their learners. This is expected to lead to a more formalised collaborative approach to delivery.

28. A number of local authority areas have a part tertiary system for post-16 provision. In Wrexham, four schools retain post-16 provision (including one special school and one Welsh Medium provider), with Yale College providing the largest proportion of post-16 provision, delivering a broad mix of academic and vocational routes. The recent Estyn review recognised the 14-19 partnerships that have been forged and the collaboration demonstrated by the learning providers within Wrexham.

29. The Assembly Government is pleased to see some stakeholders responding to national policy drives, in the context of local delivery. Others are not as advanced as those quoted in terms of their plans to collaborate and reshape learning delivery, but they are examining the evidence base for change. We encourage these learning providers to accelerate their planning processes and to commit to a transformation programme that will deliver the improvements required.

30. However, the fact remains that some of the collaborative work upon which learning providers are focused is too frequently based on historical precedent or on marginal education and training activity that takes little account of the demands of business and industry and learner needs. This signals a failure to tackle the weaknesses of the current arrangements and to take account of the effect this has on the skill levels of the local population.

31. Estyn has found that while many leaders in further education, work-based learning and community learning devote a great deal of their time to partnership activity, they continue to be reluctant to sign up to structural change or to collaborate with any initiatives that might threaten their corporate autonomy, jeopardise their own provision or cede responsibility for delivering courses to other providers<sup>10</sup>. As a result, too many leaders and managers are still planning in isolation rather than working in genuine strategic partnerships to meet a diverse range of learner needs.

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<sup>10</sup> Leadership and strategic management in the further education, work-based learning and adult community-based learning sectors, Estyn, May 2007

32. The Assembly Government's own Pathfinder<sup>11</sup> research revealed the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of much post-16 learning delivery; and evidence shows that the 14-19 Learning Pathways policy has yet to be consistently addressed in all areas of Wales.

33. It is no surprise therefore that the recently published Webb report raised concerns about the readiness of the learning providers to meet the challenges that Wales faces in improving the skill levels of local communities.

34. In conclusion, for many learners in Wales, voluntary collaboration has so far delivered limited improvements and there is strong evidence to recommend that post-16 learning provision is fundamentally reshaped, reconfigured and transformed to ensure that it has the right structure and capacity to deliver the skills of the future<sup>12</sup>.

### **The Transformation Policy**

35. Having taken account of the current data for learning attainment in Wales, international comparisons, through the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and evidence provided to Webb, the Assembly Government is committed to a policy of establishing geographic and sectoral Learning Partnerships. Once created, these Learning Partnerships should plan and implement change that is capable of supporting improvements outlined in Assembly Government policy. This will include the targets set for 14-19 year olds; those targets established to improve institutional effectiveness and quality of provision; the aims of increasing attainment and progression to the next phase of education and training; improving access to Welsh language provision; and those targets focused on sector and skill-based requirements. Specifically we wish to work with partners to address the following key indicators of performance:

- **an improvement in levels of basic skills;**
- **an increase in the rate of 16-18 participation in education, training and employment;**
- **an increase in the rate of 19-24 participation in education, training and employment;**
- **an increase in overall learner success rates, reflecting higher levels of learner completion as well as the achievement of qualification aims;**
- **an increase in Level 2 and 3 qualifications;**

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<sup>11</sup> Geographic Pathfinders are strategic reviews that look at the effectiveness and efficiency of the current organisation and delivery of post-16 learning provision (excluding higher education) in a specified local area. Subsequently, they make recommendations on how provision might be better organised. Information is available at:

[http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy\\_strategy\\_and\\_planning/modernising\\_learning\\_network/Geographic-Pathfinders/?lang=en](http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/policy_strategy_and_planning/modernising_learning_network/Geographic-Pathfinders/?lang=en)

<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that the Assembly intends to re-examine how best to deliver all aspects of high-quality careers advice and guidance in Wales. We will review the model for Careers Wales, examining how the service needs to be structured, resourced and prioritised to deliver its new agenda.

- **an increase in Level 4 qualifications; and**
- **an increase in progression to higher level learning or higher level employment.**

36. The criteria we will use to evaluate plans to transform education and training delivery are set out below. The criteria should be used by Learning Partnerships to develop plans, and reflect the demonstrable benefits any potential transformation will need to address.

(i)	<p><b>The strategic fit</b>, which demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the rationale for the transformation, including the desired timeframe for implementation and the anticipated outcome;</li> <li>• the effect of the change on provision outside that which is provided by the Learning Partnership;</li> <li>• learner benefits envisaged; and</li> <li>• the contribution towards economic regeneration, social justice and sustainability.</li> </ul>
(ii)	<p><b>Improvements for learners</b>, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plans for a range and breadth of provision, which meets evidenced need, including access to high quality programmes via modern technologies;</li> <li>• development of employment and learning opportunities especially for young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs), the economically inactive and low skilled target groups;</li> <li>• provision of equality of access to education and training programmes for learners wherever they live, addressing travel to learn issues as appropriate; and</li> <li>• links with associated community services and facilities, such as health care, leisure, and the arts.</li> </ul>
(iii)	<p><b>Improvements for employers and the local economy</b>, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• account of employer and local economy needs;</li> <li>• improvements in relevance, efficiency, breadth and quality of provision in meeting identified sector skill needs; and</li> <li>• development of shared specialist facilities, where appropriate, which again meet identified sector priorities.</li> </ul>

(iv) **Cost effectiveness, long term sustainability and financial benefits**, to demonstrate:

- reduction of unnecessary overlap and duplication of provision;
- the achievement of costed synergies;
- improved efficiencies in school sixth forms operating with fewer than 150 students; and in further education institutions operating with an annual turnover of less than £15 million;
- investment in provision that meets demand and will provide a learning environment that is fully fit for purpose;
- viability of provision and impact on learning providers, not part of the Learning Partnership;
- improvements in the use of recurrent funding;
- the use of ICT learning platforms, to improve efficiency and effectiveness of delivery, and how technology is scaleable, compatible and capable of supporting future collaborations;
- consideration of the impact of changes on space utilisation; and
- implications for financial health of participating schools, local further education institutions and other providers.

(v) **Acceptability and impact of the proposal** in the context of the constituent local authorities, community learning, further education institutions, higher education institutions and work-based learning providers as well as DCELLS. This should include:

- evidence that key stakeholders are in agreement with the proposal submitted, and due consideration has been given to the potential impact of the proposal on individual providers, including 11-16 maintained school provision, work-based learning provision and community learning; and
- an inclusive impact assessment.

(vi) **Provision of high quality learning**, to demonstrate:

- improved consistency in standards between providers within and across sectors;
- making the best use of available resources to provide a world class education and training system, meeting global and intermediate targets for level 2 & 3 achievements;
- building on good practice and outstanding achievements already demonstrated within the locality/region;
- supporting the improvement of Estyn inspection grades for individual and partnership provision;

- clear strategies, targets and action plans to ensure that learning provision reaches at least a 'good' standard with an aspiration towards achieving excellence;
- safeguarding and enhancing the quality of teaching and the learner experience; and
- improvements in the effectiveness of strategic planning and quality assurance.

(vii) **Enhancement of Welsh language and bilingual provision**, to demonstrate:

- improvements in amount and range of Welsh-medium provision available through network reconfiguration within local authority areas, or across local authority boundaries where appropriate;
- clear post-16-18 progression routes and options through the medium of Welsh or bilingually in further education, work based learning and school sixth form provision, as appropriate;
- improvements in the number and range of options offered through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, by institution and the partnership, as appropriate; and
- the positive effect that the proposal will have on the range and quality of Welsh-medium opportunities for learners.

(viii) **Demonstrate improvements in equality and diversity**. This should include:

- consideration of the impact of the proposed collaborative model to reach under represented groups;
- improved opportunities available to all young people and adults particularly those under-represented groups; and
- management and governance arrangements to promote and sustain equality and diversity.

(ix) **Management and Governance arrangements**, to demonstrate:

- the commitment of partners to the sustainability of the initiative;
- the means by which the collaborative partnership will operate to deliver year-on-year improvements for learners; and
- the effective management of performance, including the use of self-assessment, risk management, and contingency plans.

(x) Demonstration of anticipated **sources of funding** to facilitate the proposal, to include:

- use of recurrent and capital budgets;
- sale of assets where functions will move to a new learning infrastructure;
- contributions from local authorities, further education institution(s), higher education institution(s) and WEFO;
- prudential and institutional borrowing;
- use of appropriate third party funding streams; and
- potential submissions to Assembly Government funding streams.

37. Plans for transformation of education and training provision should be compliant with HM Treasury's Five Case Model. This will ensure that there is a structured approach to major investment that is sound, realistic and deliverable.

### ***The Five Case Model***

*The Five Case Model has been in widespread use across the public sector for many years and is the recommended standard for preparation of business cases. It is structured to ensure that proposals for major investment are sound, realistic, well-planned and deliverable.*

*Under the model, business cases are broken down into five different aspects which are interconnected but distinct (namely, the strategic, economic, financial, commercial and management aspects of the case). All these five aspects are important; however, their size will vary from proposal to proposal depending upon its nature and complexity. Further information is available at:*

[http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/economic\\_data\\_and\\_tools/greenbook/data\\_greenbook\\_business.cfm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/economic_data_and_tools/greenbook/data_greenbook_business.cfm)

### **Learning Partnership Models**

38. The Learning Partnership models are provided as a means to guide local authorities and education and training providers towards the most appropriate means of collaborating based on the priorities for change.

39. Although many Learning Partnerships will be working to a new agenda, we recognise that some stakeholders are already in the process of taking forward provider network changes. Some are currently analysing learner performance; others are appraising options for close network collaboration and change; a few are well advanced and planning to implement transformation. The Assembly Government will continue to support such partnerships in developing and implementing transformation.

## Learning Partnership Model 1: Consideration of 16-19 Provision

40. Local Authorities will lead on the development of 16-19 schools provision, in partnership with the further education sector, to secure the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure. They will also take forward the protocols to establish a tertiary system for post-16 learning delivery, where appropriate.

41. The following changes, either separately or collectively, should be fully considered in securing significant improvements for post-16 learners:

- close but informal collaboration of schools and other learning providers, such as further education institutions and work-based learning providers, to deliver the local curriculum requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure;
- clusters of schools working collaboratively by joint governance, using the School Regulations<sup>13</sup> which came into force in March 2008 to allow for whole school voluntary collaboration;
- the governing bodies of further education institutions and schools establishing voluntary collaborations, by joint governance, using regulations<sup>14</sup> expected to come into force in December 2008; and
- removal of one or more school sixth forms and transfer to a suitable alternative, which may be another school sixth form; or the direct transfer to a general further education institution or to a further education institution to create a tertiary college.

42. It should be noted that any changes to the organisation of schools will be subject to the statutory requirements that apply to this sector.

43. In preparing plans to transform post-16 education and training delivery, local authorities may wish to consider working models of good practice. For example, Wolverhampton City Council has a long established provider partnership which is bringing increased choice for post-14 learners and significant improvement to post-14 and post-16 learner attainment.

44. Other areas of the UK are also making good progress in developing bespoke learning delivery solutions to improve learner outcomes, such as Cornwall College, Truro College and Blackburn College.

45. In this context, local authorities may wish to consider the Webb consortium model, where the learner and provider critical mass is sufficiently large.

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<sup>13</sup> The Collaboration between Maintained Schools (Wales) Regulations 2008

<sup>14</sup> The Collaboration (Maintained Schools and Further Education Bodies) (Wales) Regulations 2008

## **Learning Partnership Model 2: Work-Based Learning – Future Provision Development**

46. Development of future work-based learning provision will be led by the Assembly Government, which recognises that there is a need to continue to improve the quality of work-based learning provision throughout Wales. Whilst work-based learning has shown a marked improvement in recent years, a quarter of providers inspected by Estyn in 2006-07 had unsatisfactory standards overall (Grade 4).

47. We intend to increase the availability of practical and work-based learning, involving further education institutions, training providers and employers for the next work-based learning tendering exercise (2010-13), but aim to reduce the number of contracts issued, to ensure that provision is of a quality and type required to support successful learner attainment. This will allow us to drive-up excellence within work-based learning in line with progress being made in other education and training settings.

## **Learning Partnership Model 3: Further Education Institution and Higher Education Institution Models**

48. Further and higher education institutions are autonomous bodies which receive significant levels of public funding. The Assembly Government wishes institutions in both sectors to consider their missions jointly and separately and the strategic contribution they expect to make to deliver the education and training needed today and for the future.

49. Consequently, further and higher education institutions may wish to consider the following:

- Informal collaborative arrangements between colleges, between universities, and between colleges and universities, to provide post-16 learners with an entitlement to a range of learning options above and beyond provision provided by a single institution. The type and quality of vocational provision would be defined; colleges would engage with employers and provide learning in a working environment. Further education/further education and further education/higher education associations should aim to mitigate issues associated with small colleges and learner groups, establish the delivery of skill specialisms and skills centres of excellence where appropriate; and support the further development of sectoral specialist progression routes.
- Formalised Learning Partnerships of further education institutions, using the collaboration regulations, to allow for the expansion of programme range and associated economies of scale, associated expansion in progression routes, and stronger and better co-ordinated links with industry.

- Further education<sup>15</sup> mergers to significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of further education provision within a geographic area and promote wider access and opportunities for post-16 education and training, including work-based training and community provision.
- The merger of further and higher education institutions<sup>16</sup> which should be clearly premised on the improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of further education provision to improve learner benefits and the growth of a variety of traditional and new programme areas; the establishment of centres of excellence and the like. Such mergers should only be considered however if they would not compromise the core mission of either partner.

#### **Learning Partnership Model 4: Adult Community Learning Delivery**

50. The Assembly Government is already taking the lead on improving the delivery of Adult Community Learning, in association with relevant providers. For this area of delivery we believe that the Webb consortium model has merit. Our proposed option is to create Adult Community Learning Partnerships across Wales for the delivery of Assembly Government-funded provision and we will consult on this in September 2008. The Partnerships will deliver provision for adults aged 19+.

51. The proposal is that each Learning Partnership will be responsible for planning and funding Adult Community Learning provision in a specified geographical area. It is envisaged that the Learning Partnerships will include representation from further education institutions, local authorities and voluntary and community sector organisations. This will provide greater opportunity to extend partnership working in the delivery of Adult Community Learning. We will be exploring options to integrate these Learning Partnerships with existing planning processes and networks, for example the higher education-based Reaching Wider Partnerships, in order to avoid duplication of effort where possible.

#### **Transformation Planning**

52. The Assembly Government does not necessarily wish to restrict transformation developments to the models outlined in this document and we welcome further discussion with Learning Partnerships that wish to develop other collaborative arrangements that are possible within the current regulations, and are appropriate to the needs of learners.

53. However, we expect Learning Partnerships to focus on one or more areas for development, according to the greatest need for learner improvement. In practical terms this will mean addressing the range of choice for individual learners; low participation in learning; poor quality provision; inefficiencies that reduce the flow of funds directly to the learner; the environment for learning; and both learner and employer demand for change.

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<sup>15</sup> Proposals should take account of relevant statutory powers enabling Further Education corporations to integrate.

<sup>16</sup> Proposals should take account of relevant statutory powers enabling further education corporations to integrate with higher education corporations.

54. In meeting the challenges set, to make significant improvement to skill levels of all young people and adults by 2015, the Learning Partnerships should consider evidence available through benchmarking data; the outcomes of independent national and local reviews; and robust option appraisals to agree priorities, which will in turn inform planning.

55. As a minimum the Assembly Government expects collaborative proposals to take account of the relative inefficiencies, ineffectiveness and inflexibility that occur in post-16 provider delivery. For example, we believe that this is more likely to arise when school sixth forms operate with fewer than 150<sup>17</sup> students, but recognise that rural and Welsh medium issues must also be taken into account. It similarly happens when further education institutions operate with an annual turnover of less than £15 million<sup>18</sup>.

56. Further, all plans should demonstrate how Learning Partnerships intend to promote increased employer engagement, so that provision is responsive to employer needs at the local and national level, especially for post-19 learners.

57. Finally, all Learning Partnership plans should be made in full knowledge of the potential impact they may have on other local providers, other sectors and other phases of school education. The management of risks associated with potential negative impact should be fully investigated. For some stakeholders this may require a Learning Partnership to synchronise planning and implementation of aligned priorities. For example, Learning Partnerships might wish to specifically consider synchronising reconfiguration plans for the delivery of post-16 provision with the broader reorganisation of secondary schools in some local authority areas.

58. In the case of local authorities and further education institutions the Assembly Government has specific legislative and funding powers<sup>19</sup> to direct change. However our policy is, in the first instance, to work positively with those Learning Partnerships that have a clear ambition and intention to transform, supported by a strong evidence base. We will only take a more interventionist approach, on behalf of post-16 learners, where there is strong evidence for transformational change but plans to secure the requisite change are not being progressed.

59. In consideration of learner needs we are committed to implement the necessary provider delivery changes as soon as possible. Indeed Assembly Government officials are already working with some stakeholders who are progressing plans for major delivery change; and we anticipate the implementation of several major transformation programmes to begin in 2009.

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<sup>17</sup> "Trading Places A Management Handbook on the Supply and Allocation of School Places", The Audit Commission, 1997

<sup>18</sup> The Webb Review

<sup>19</sup> Examples of powers include, conditions of Assembly Government funding of learning providers, covering both revenue and capital investment; statutory responsibilities and the actions we would take to ensure these, as outlined in our remit with local authorities; and terms of work-based agreements and funding thereof.

60. To ensure that no learner in Wales is disadvantaged, we expect around sixty per cent of all other proposals to be agreed by July 2009 and be in an implementation phase by September 2010. In a few cases where major transformation change is predicated on statutory protocols and capital infrastructure investments we will agree suitable implementation timeframes with stakeholders.

61. All remaining proposals should be agreed, in principle, by January 2010 and implementation activity in place by September 2011, notwithstanding any additional time requirements for those plans that require specific statutory activity or funding sources to progress.

62. We are aware that transforming education and training provision is not necessarily cost-neutral. When providers come forward with Learning Partnership proposals that demonstrate significant, evidence-based change, to meet the future needs of learners and employers, we will work with them to identify potential sources of funding to secure successful implementation. This will include agreeing levels of Assembly Government funding that will be available to fully investigate complex permanent arrangements such as mergers; and capital investment for those plans that are predicated on transformational new builds.

63. During the transition from our existing Strategic Capital Investment procedures to our full transformation programme, Assembly Government officials will take note of any emerging proposals.

64. The Assembly Government does not underestimate the challenges we all face in securing the best possible provision for our learners. We recognise our own responsibility to steer the successful transformation of education and training provision and intend to set up appropriate arrangements to support stakeholders in the development of proposals and plans, which will result in significant improvements for learners.

## **Next Steps**

65. In the coming months, Assembly Government officials will be contacting all local authorities, further education institutions and higher education institutions, to discuss the ways in which the policy should be implemented and to support stakeholders in bringing forward appropriate proposals for the transformation of post-16 learning provision. For those stakeholders who have well-developed plans for transformation, officials will discuss how these fit with the Assembly Government policy and how implementation might be achieved.

66. Following this, if relevant fora to discuss proposals already exist, for example the 14-19 local area networks, then these should be used to begin the debate on examining the evidence that exists to improve local provider delivery. Otherwise new stakeholder links should be established.

67. To support emerging Learning Partnerships and to engage the wider stakeholder network, we intend to hold a number of seminars to explore the underpinning elements of successful collaborative ventures. In addition we will be providing training in the development of the HM Treasury Five Case Model. This

model has been adopted by the Assembly Government as the management tool to support any bids to the Strategic Capital Investment Board. Learning Partnerships will therefore need to meet the requirements of the Five Case Model to gain Assembly Government approval to implement activity and be eligible to access available funds.

68. The Assembly Government expects learning providers to take the necessary steps to form geographic and sectoral Learning Partnerships by early November 2008; to carry-out a strategic review to analyse the current learning provision and delivery; determine the change required to make significant improvements to available provision; and to agree the shape and form of future provision and delivery. Where sectoral proposals are being considered, the appropriate sector skills council should be involved in discussions prior to agreeing the direction and shape of change.

69. Stakeholders should then record the agreed proposal in the form of a Strategic Outline Programme to be submitted to DCELLS, by **15 January 2009**. The Strategic Outline Programme, shown at **Annex B**, should be completed to demonstrate how the proposal will support the delivery of the Transformation Policy. It should summarise what is being suggested, together with a brief rationale and indication of the expected timeframe for delivery. Stakeholders should ensure that the appropriate DCELLS Area Team is involved at the Strategic Outline Programme planning stage and in many cases these officials will already have a long standing involvement in network change discussions and plans.

70. The Assembly Government will review each Strategic Outline Programme and consider the appropriateness of requesting the further development of the proposal into a Strategic Outline Case, which will establish the case for change and, if appropriate, the need for investment. These should be submitted by the end of June 2009 or, in exceptional cases by the end of September 2009.

71. On receipt of the Strategic Outline Case, we will assess the evidence provided and, where appropriate work with stakeholders to complete the further stages of the business case and subsequently agree an implementation strategy.

72. DCELLS officials will be available to support stakeholders on establishing a rationale for change; and planning and implementing those plans that will provide the best outcome for learners; lead to improved social justice and increased employability.

73. For proposals that are already well-developed, including the Pathfinder Pilots, and agreed in principle by the Assembly Government, we invite stakeholders to submit a Strategic Outline Case, by 15 January 2009.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Submission</b>	<b>Date</b>
For proposals at an early state of development	Strategic Outline Programme	15 January 2009
For proposals that are already well-developed and agreed in principle by the Assembly Government	Strategic Outline Case	15 January 2009
For proposals approved by the Assembly Government further to Strategic Outline Programme submission on 15 December 2008	Strategic Outline Case	30 June 2009 <b>or</b> 30 September 2009

## STATISTICAL AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

### 1. Maintained Secondary Schools

<b>Number of Pupils, Teachers, Achievements</b>	<b>Totals</b>
2007 Number of Pupils in all Wales Maintained Secondary school (excluding special schools)	210,353
2006/07 Teachers employed qualified and non-qualified (FTE)	13,430
2006/07 Total support staff (FTE)	5,468
2006/07 Percentage of pupils aged 15 achieving 5 or more GCSEs grade A*-C or equivalent	54.2%
2006/07 Percentage of pupils aged 17 achieving 2 or more A/AS/AVCE/ASVCE levels grade A-C or advanced GNVQ	67.5%
	<b>Expenditure</b>
2006/07 Secondary school outturn expenditure 2006-07 (inc. all monies held centrally by the LEAs and spent on behalf of the schools)	£958,920,047
2006/07 Budget Allocation for sixth form provision	£100,562,156

Sources:

- [005452] Stats Wales Secondary Schools – All pupils on Register  
 Stats Wales Secondary Schools – Teachers employed, qualified and unqualified  
 [001897] Stats Wales Examination entries and achievements of 15 year olds  
 [001892] Stats Wales Achievements for 17 year olds entering 2 or more A levels or equivalent

Expenditure data: RO1 forms

National Planning and Funding System (NPFS)

### 2. Further Education Institutions

<b>Number of Enrolments and Staff, excluding LEA Community Learning, Achievement</b>	<b>Totals</b>
2006/07 (all year) Enrolments on FE learning programmes part time	218,040
2006/07 (all year) Enrolments on FE learning programmes full time	42,820
2005/06 Number of teaching and learning staff (FTE)	4,505
2005/06 Number of supporting teaching and learning staff, and other support (FTE)	4,645
2006/07 % Learning activity completion (excluding work based learning provision)	87%
2006/07 % Learning activity attainment (excluding work based learning provision)	70%
2006/07 % Learning activity success rate (excluding work based learning provision)	60%
	<b>Expenditure</b>
2006/07 FE Expenditure	£ 403,872,000

Note: Merthyr College FE provision excluded from 2006/07 learner and expenditure data (included in HEI data) but included in 2005/06 staff data

Sources:

SDR 68/2008: Further Education, Work-based Learning & Community Learning in Wales, 2006/07

SDR 138/2008: Staff at Further Education Institutions in Wales 2006/07  
Financial position of the further education sector 2006/07

SDR 106/2008: National Comparators for Further Education and Work-Based Learning: 2006/07

### FE Attainment

At present, equivalent attainment data for the Further Education sector is not available and as such cannot be included in this annex. However, it should be noted that FE sector attainment measures are being developed as part of a wider project being undertaken by the Welsh Assembly Government and will be published on 17 July 2008.

### 3. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

HE Enrolments, Staff, Achievements	Totals
2006/07 Enrolments at all Welsh HEIs (and OU in Wales)	150,710
2006/07 Number of Academic Staff at Welsh HEIs	8,320
2006/07 Number of Non Academic Staff at Welsh HEIs	9,750
2006/07 HE qualifications obtained at Welsh HEIs (and OU)	35,085
	<b>Expenditure</b>
2006/07 HEI expenditure	£978,416,000

Source: Stats Wales

[002381] Enrolments for Postgraduate, Undergraduate and Further Education

[002971 & 002972] Staff at Higher Education Institutions (includes full and part time staff)

[005237] Undergraduate and Postgraduate qualifications obtained at Welsh HEIs

[002414] Total expenditure of Welsh HEIs

### 4. Work Based Learning Provision

Number of Learning Programme Enrolments, Achievement	Totals
2006/07 Enrolments on Work Based Learning at FEIs	14,625
2006/07 Enrolments on Work Based Learning at other training providers	58,545
2006/07 Framework success rate in Modern Apprenticeship (MA)	43%
2006/07 Framework success rate in Foundation Modern Apprenticeship (FMA)	53%

Source:

SDR 68/2008: Further Education, Work-Based Learning and Community Learning in Wales, 2006/07

SDR 106/2008: National Comparators for Further Education and Work-Based Learning: 2006/07

### Work Based Learning Attainment

Work Based Learning attainment indicators are currently being revised as part of the wider project outlined above and published on 17 July 2008.

However interim measures for 2005/06 placed framework attainment of MA and FMA programmes at 31 and 44 per 100 leavers respectively.

Framework outcomes varied considerably between learning areas, with attainment being highest in MA Transportation and FMA Hair and Beauty, and lowest in MA Management & Professional and both MA and FMA Health Care & Public Services.

## 5. LEA Community Learning Provision

<b>Number of Learning Programme Enrolments</b>	<b>Totals</b>
2006/07 Full time enrolments at FEIs	15
2006/07 Part time enrolments at FEIs	38,870
2006/07 Full time enrolments at LEA	0
2006/07 Part time enrolments at LEA	28,795

Source:

SDR 68/2008: Further Education, Work-Based Learning and Community Learning in Wales, 2006/07



**Transforming Education and Training Provision for Wales**

**The Strategic Outline Programme**

**Guidance**

1. The function of this stage is to ascertain the strategic fit of the proposal with the overarching Transformation Policy; other aligning national policies; and current local strategies for securing improvements to education and training provision and learner improvements, post-16, or post-11 if appropriate.
  
2. The development of the Strategic Outline Programme includes a strategic review of current provision in order to agree the context for change. The review should begin by asking questions about the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of learning provision, and take account of alignment with Spatial Plans and labour market demands. It should conclude with an agreement on the elements of provision and provision delivery that need to be changed.
  
3. The review should be followed by an outline planning stage to agree the geographic area/sectoral transformation goals, outcomes and outputs. It should also propose a strategy to achieve the outputs and outcomes desired; indicate appropriate timeframes to implement changes; and, in the case of proposals that will require new builds, potential sources of funding.

**Proposers:**

**Geographic Area or Sector:**

**Participating Stakeholders and Providers:**

**The Strategic Review.** This should provide a rationale for the elements of education and training provision to be addressed in the proposal and the desired goals, outcomes and outputs.

- a) **Rationale** for the proposal, which should summarise the evidence base for the strategic direction of change being proposed
  
- b) **Impact** on local labour market demand.
  
- c) **Proposals should clearly identify learner outputs and outcomes** that will arise from the proposed transformation model This should include a summary of the expected impact of the proposed changes on rates of participation; quality of delivery; and learner attainment and progression.

**The Geographic/Sectoral Transformation Strategy,** outlining the steps the Learning Partnership wish to take to secure the agreed deliverables

**Expected timeframe for each delivery step and to complete the transformation programme**

**Proposed sources of funding**