

## DWLP01

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

### **Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee**

#### **Datblygu'r ddarpariaeth Gymraeg ôl-16 | Development of post-16 Welsh language provision**

Ymateb gan Y Coleg Gymraeg Cenedlaethol | Evidence from Y Coleg Gymraeg Cenedlaethol

Thank you for the invitation to give evidence to the Committee for its [inquiry](#) into the development of post-16 Welsh-medium provision.

This briefing note summarises our main messages, and the Chief Executive of the Coleg Gymraeg (the Coleg), Dr Ioan Matthews, will be pleased to elaborate and answer questions during the oral evidence session on 17 April 2024.

The Coleg's Evidence (653 words)

#### 1. Post-16 Welsh-medium and bilingual strategy

Following a review in 2017, the Coleg was given responsibility for the Welsh language and bilingualism within the post-16 sector. In 2019, the then Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, published a [Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh-medium Action Plan](#), which targets *everyone* in the sector regardless of their Welsh language skills ([summary](#)).

The table below shows progress since 2017-18:

Table 1 – Learning activities with at least an element of Welsh

| Year    | Further education | Work-based learning |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 2017/18 | 9.6%              | 13.4%               |
| 2018/19 | 11.9%             | 15.4%               |

|         |       |       |
|---------|-------|-------|
| 2019/20 | 11.8% | 14.6% |
| 2020/21 | 14.7% | 20.8% |
| 2021/22 | 18.2% | 25.3% |

**Source:** <https://www.gov.wales/cymraeg-2050-annual-reports>

While we recognise the significant challenges associated with Welsh-medium post-16 data, we are pleased with the progress made so far and the willing collaboration between the Coleg, the colleges, apprenticeship providers and bodies such as ColegauCymru, NTfW and Qualifications Wales.

## 2. Welsh-medium and bilingual post-16 funding and its impact

As a result of the Co-operation Agreement, the Coleg's post-16 budget was increased:

- 2022-23: £1.5m
- 2023-24: £2.825

The additional funding allowed investment in the following projects:

- Sixty-two further education practitioners appointed. Gower College and Cardiff and Vale College funded to develop Teacher Support Projects.
- Twenty-one apprenticeship assessors appointed. Apprenticeship infrastructure supported at ACT and the NPTC Group of Colleges.
- Promotional grants allocated to providers, and awards for apprentices and learners funded.

There had been a commitment to provide an additional £840,000 in 2024-25, but it was [confirmed in January](#) that the Coleg would not receive this increase. The Government published a [document](#) in February setting out a commitment to reprofile the increase in 2025-26.

A flat budget in 2024-25 allows the Coleg to continue to support the projects listed above but it will not be possible to support the following new activities:

- Expansion in Health and Care and Childcare where there is a shortage of bilingual workers.
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- The development of Construction provision at every college.
- The appointment of more apprenticeship assessors beyond areas already receiving support.
- A conference for staff in these sectors.

### 3. The Coleg's recommendations

Turning to the Committee's fourth question:

"To understand how decisions around future funding for the development of post-16 Welsh language provision will impact the Cymraeg 2050 trajectory and targets."

it is important to consider the wider picture including the changes and opportunities presented by the establishment of the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER).

The [Tertiary Education and Research Act](#) places [strategic duties](#) on CTER in relation to the Welsh language. The Coleg has been designated to advise the Commission on these duties. A [statement of the Government's strategic priorities](#) has also been published and has a clear focus on the Welsh language. The original [Action Plan](#) was launched five years ago, so it is timely for a review in order to raise expectations over the next period.

Our initial recommendations are outlined below. These will be developed over the next few months as we take up our advisory role in relation to CTER:

- **CTER** – CTER must fully implement its statutory duties relating to the Welsh language and use its power as a funder and regulator to ensure, in collaboration with the Coleg, that post-16 education providers develop Welsh-medium and bilingual provision that is suitable and available to *all*.
  - **Data** – CTER should carry out a review of Welsh-medium and bilingual post-16 data. Challenging targets should be set for providers, and their achievement measured in a meaningful way. This should dovetail with the Welsh Language Education Bill and the *Tafllwybr* (the million speakers Trajectory).
  - **Funding** – A review of the way post-16 Welsh-medium and bilingual education is funded should be carried out to ensure that *all* providers receive support to develop and sustain Welsh-medium and bilingual
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provision at an appropriate level that is consistent with the Government's ambition for the Welsh language and the Cymraeg 2050 Strategy.

- **Qualifications** – The recommendations of the [Sharron Lusher report](#) should be implemented in relation to increasing the number of Welsh-medium vocational qualifications available to learners.
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