

Assembly Communications – Outreach

Summary of the Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications Questionnaire

Background

The National Assembly for Wales' Communications team works with the Assembly's committees to engage the people of Wales in Assembly business. We do this by creating direct links between the issues people care about and the work of committees, and providing tailored opportunities for them to have their say.

This document provides a summary of responses received to the Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications questionnaire conducted by the Outreach team.

Although not specifically designed to inform the Enterprise and Business Committee Inquiry into Assisting Young People into Work, some elements of the questionnaire and subsequent findings may be relevant to the inquiry's terms of reference.

Methodology

As part of the Children, Young People and Education Committee's scoping exercise into the Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications the Outreach Team conducted a survey in paper-based format. Participants were asked a range of questions relating to the importance of literacy skills, the skills and subjects young people should be taught at school, their opinion of the Welsh Baccalaureate and whether the qualifications they can currently obtain are suitable for gaining employment.

The survey was created with the aim of targeting children and young people between 14-19 years of age.

Awareness Raising

The questionnaire was promoted by Assembly staff with relevant groups visiting the Senedd, receiving education visits, and during the Assembly's presence at summer events.



Key Statistics

1177 Total number of survey responses received

Geographical Summary of Responses

Home postcode of survey respondents

Total number of responses: 754

CF: 299 (South Wales Central)

CH: 11 (North Wales)

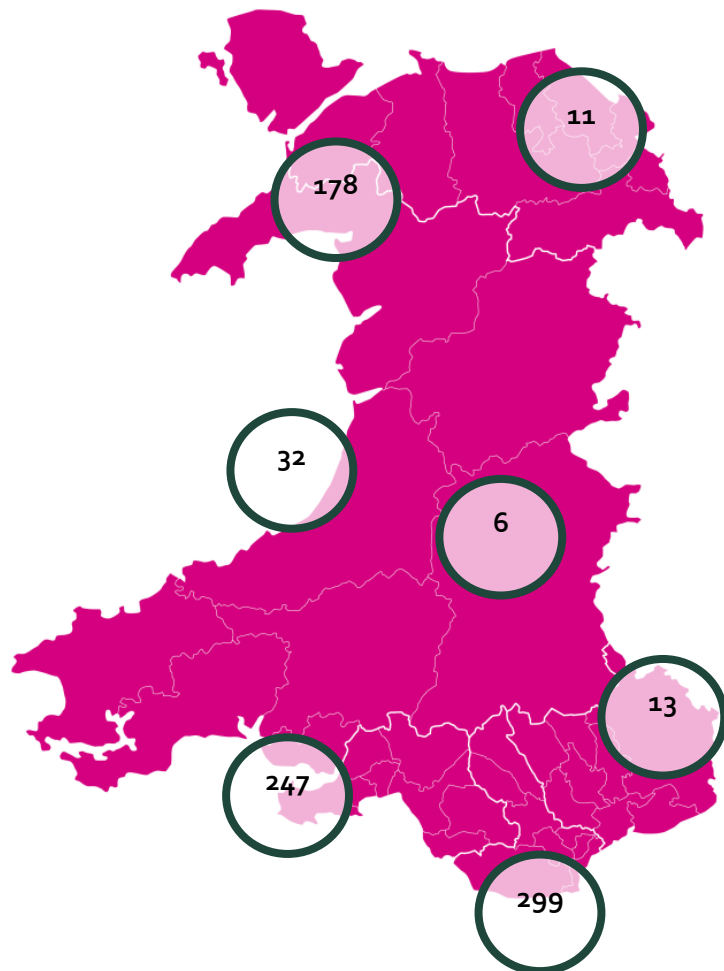
LL: 178 (North Wales/Mid and West Wales)

LD: 6 (Mid and West Wales)

NP: 13 (South Wales East)

SA: 247 (South Wales West/Mid and West Wales)

SY: 32 (Mid and West Wales)



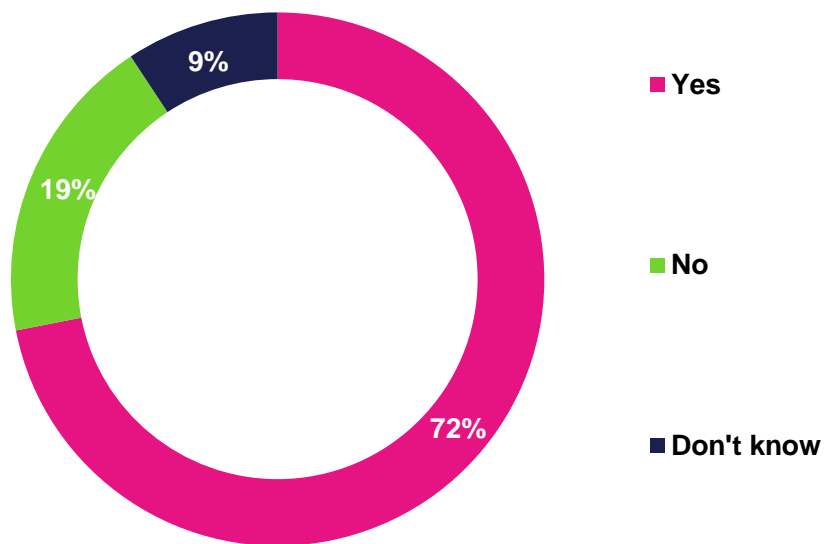
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Summary of Responses

Question 1: Do you think that reading and writing skills are more important than any other skills you gain at school? Why?

Total number of responses: 1,175

- Yes: **71.91% (845)**
- No: **18.80% (221)**
- Don't know: **9.27% (109)**



Comments

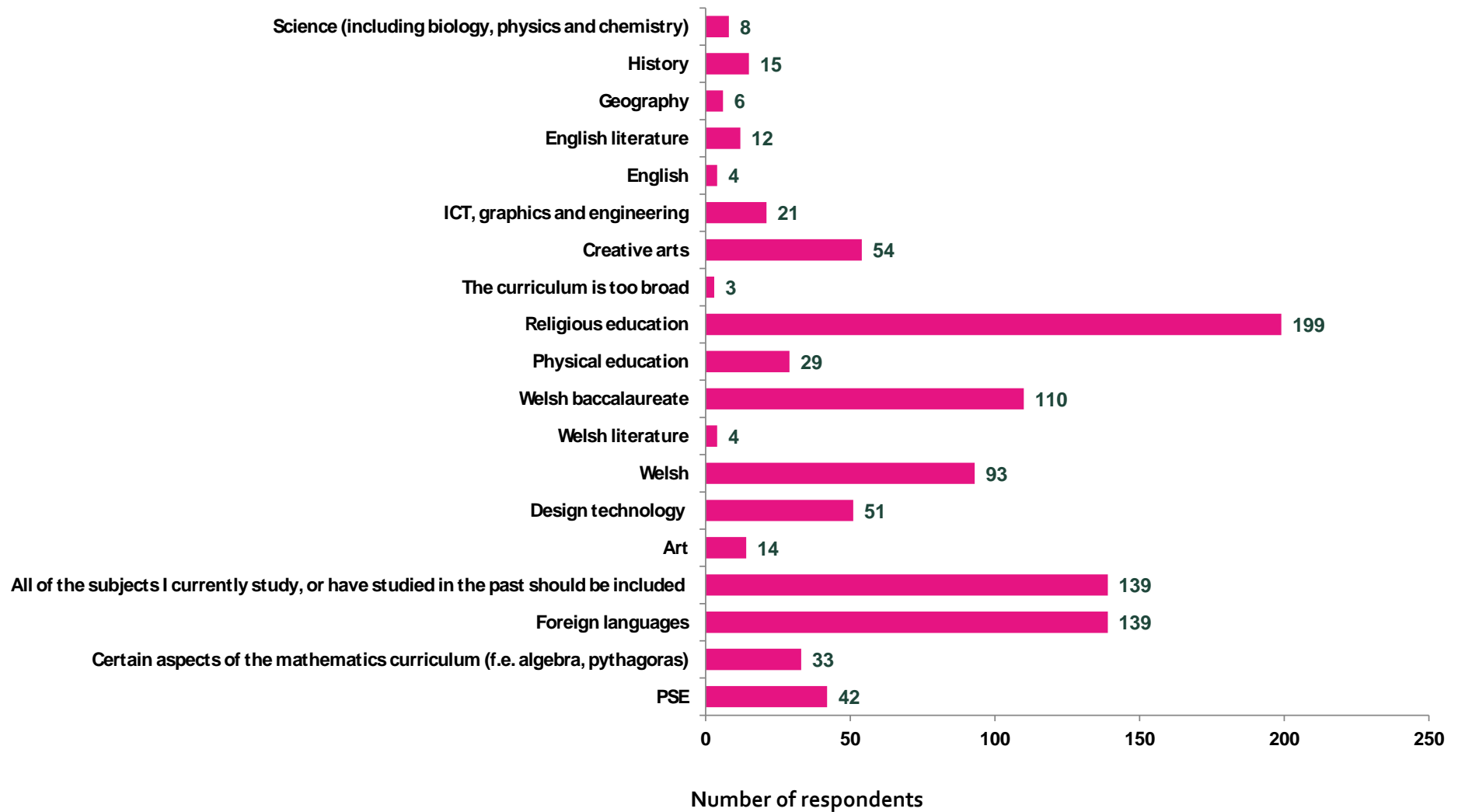
- 742 (84.5%) of the young people stated that reading and writing skills are the foundation for all other skills and dictate your future success (whether in work or in academia);
- 58 (6.6%) of respondents argued that all of the skills acquired through their education are equally important skills to reading and writing;
- 57 (6.5%) of the young people felt that other skills (e.g. financial literacy, communication and I.T) are more important in this digital age than traditional literacy skills;
- 8 (0.91%) of respondents stated that literacy skills allow people to communicate effectively with each other in society;
- 7 (0.79%) of the young people argued that literacy skills are only important in so far as they're relevant to your chosen career path;
- 3 (0.34%) of respondents felt that many jobs in this digital age do not require literacy skills;
- 2 (0.22%) of the young people stated that these basic literacy skills are often taken for granted; and
- 1 (0.11%) of the respondents argued that the state cannot rely on parents to teach their children these basic literacy skills.



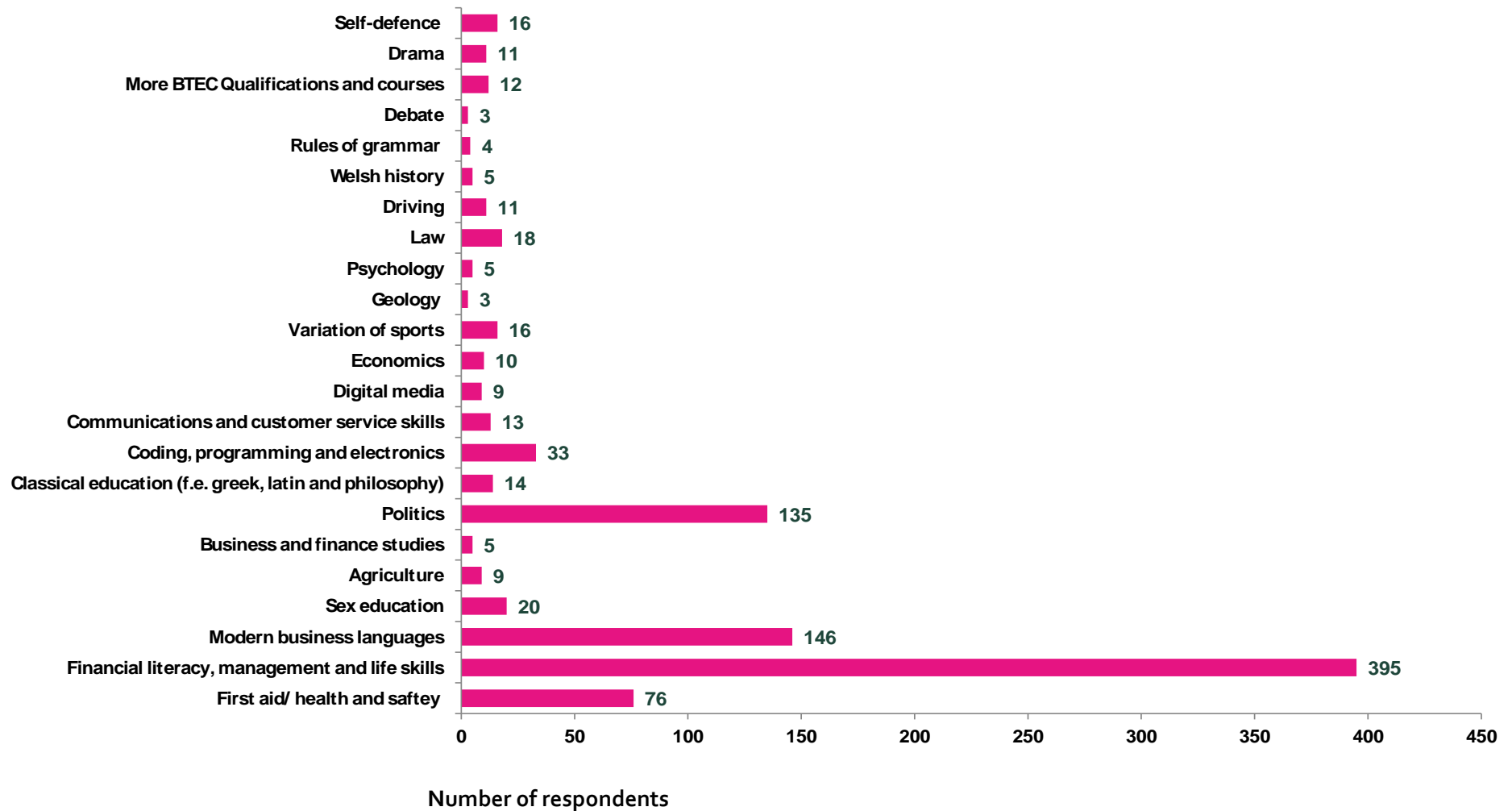
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Question 2 – Is there anything you are studying at school now, or have studied in the past, that you think shouldn't be included in the curriculum anymore?



Question 3 – Is there anything you think should be taught in schools that isn't at the moment?



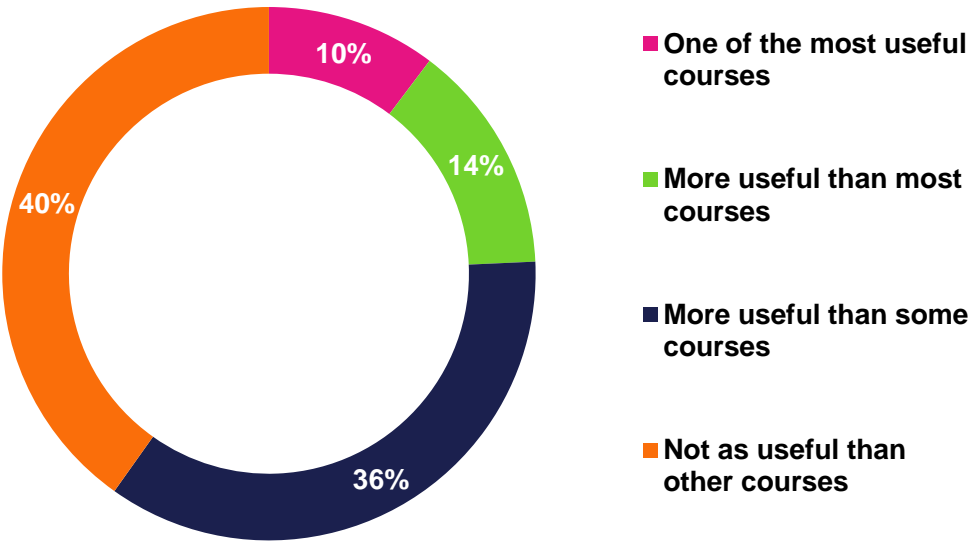
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Question 4 – In your opinion, the Welsh Bacalaureate is/was:

Total number of responses: 1,108

- One of the most useful courses: **10.28% (114)**
- More useful than most courses: **13.98% (155)**
- More useful than some courses: **35.55% (394)**
- Not as useful as other courses: **40.16% (445)**



Comments

- 289 young people stated that the Welsh Baccalaureate helped teach them a variety of core skills (e.g group work and team building, communications and public speaking);
- 44 respondents argued that the Welsh Baccalaureate isn't useful because it isn't accepted by all Universities (particularly those outside of Wales);
- 214 young people felt that the Welsh Baccalaureate is irrelevant in its worth as a qualification and not useful;
- 9 respondents stated that the Welsh Baccalaureate as a qualification is/was too easy to justify an A-level award;
- 148 young people felt that the Welsh Baccalaureate is useful in terms of its value in UCAS points when making applications to University, and awards a pupil with a recognised University/College qualification;
- 45 respondents argued that working towards the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification is/was too time consuming;
- 13 young people stated that the Welsh Baccalaureate only helps pupils who wish to go on and study in Higher or Further Education;
- 7 respondents felt that the Welsh Baccalaureate allowed them to learn more about Wales, Welsh culture and it's politics;
- 65 young people argued that the other subjects they study/studied were more important than the Welsh Baccalaureate;
- 14 respondents felt that the Welsh Baccalaureate's value hinged on what field/subject a young person wanted to go on and study;
- 4 young people stated that many of the skills they learn whilst studying the Welsh Baccalaureate were ones they had already developed through other subjects;
- 22 respondents argued that the Welsh Baccalaureate could be taught better;
- 7 young people felt that the Welsh Baccalaureate should be an optional subject choice;
- 12 respondents stated that the Welsh Baccalaureate taught them the skills employers look for when sifting job applications.



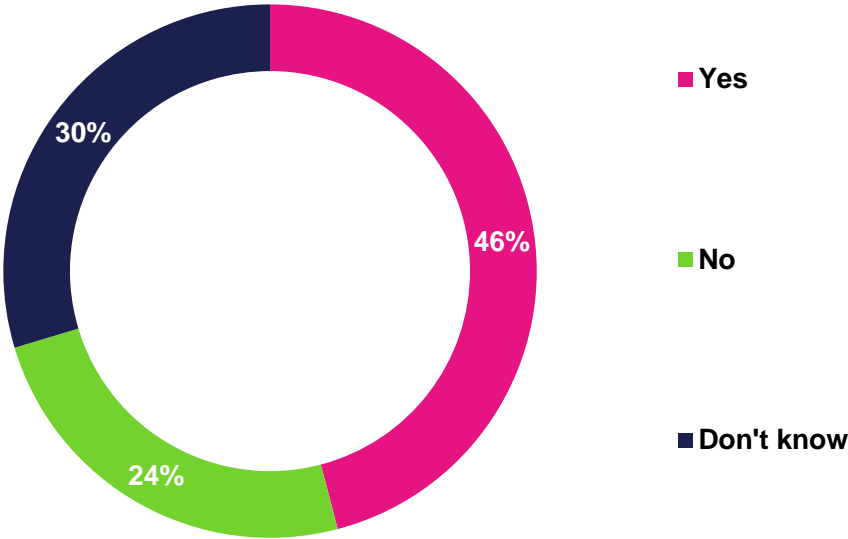
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Question 5 - Should the Welsh Bacallaureate be used as one of the main ways to give young people the right skills to find the job they want, or get into the college or university they want?

Total number of responses: 1,137

- Yes: **45.91% (522)**
- No: **24.45% (278)**
- Don't know: **26.63% (337)**



Comments

- 111 young people agreed with the question, on the basis that the Welsh Baccalaureate covers a variety of important skills pupils need to succeed;
- 54 respondents felt that as the Welsh Baccalaureate is a recognised qualification, it should be used as a way of giving young people the skills they want to work or to University/College;
- 45 young people argued against the question, on the basis that the Welsh Baccalaureate is not a useful subject to study;
- 48 respondents agreed that other subjects are equally/ more important for giving you the skills you need to enter the workforce or go to University/College;
- 30 young people felt that the Welsh Baccalaureate is/was a useful subject to study;
- 25 respondents argued that the Welsh Baccalaureate helps students to make decisions about their future;
- 19 young people stated that the Welsh Baccalaureate is an easy course and qualification for pupils to attain these necessary skills;
- 15 respondents felt that the Welsh Baccalaureate could be improved to provide students with more practical experience of the skills needed to work and/or go to College/University;
- 14 young people argued that the Welsh Baccalaureate can help you only in so far as your desire to continue studying and/or working in Wales;
- 10 respondents stated that the Welsh Baccalaureate should be an optional subject to study;
- 4 young people felt that an International Baccalaureate would be more useful in this context;
- 3 respondents argued against the question, on the basis that the qualification isn't recognised by every employer, College and University in the UK.



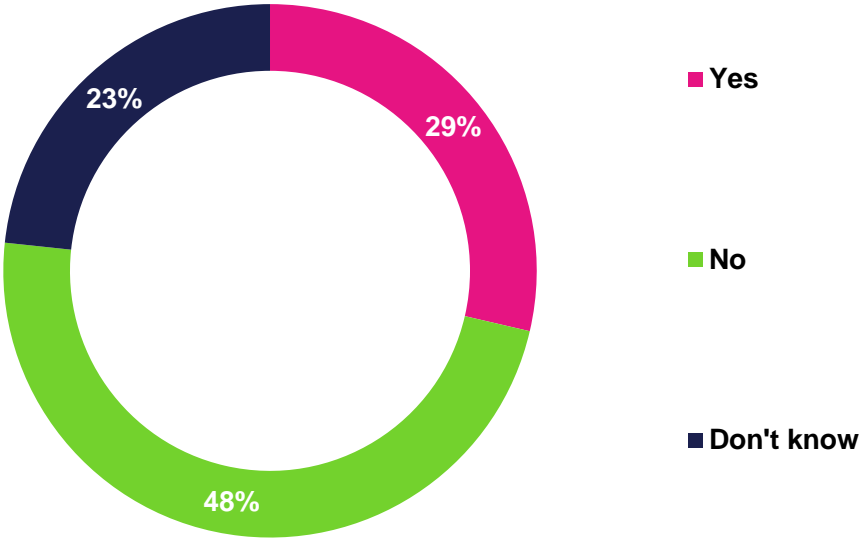
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Question 6 – Did your schools and/or your careers advisor tell you about the different vocational qualifications, like NVQs, that you can study?

Total number of responses: 1,128

- Yes: **28.63% (323)**
- No: **48.04% (542)**
- Don't know: **23.31% (263)**

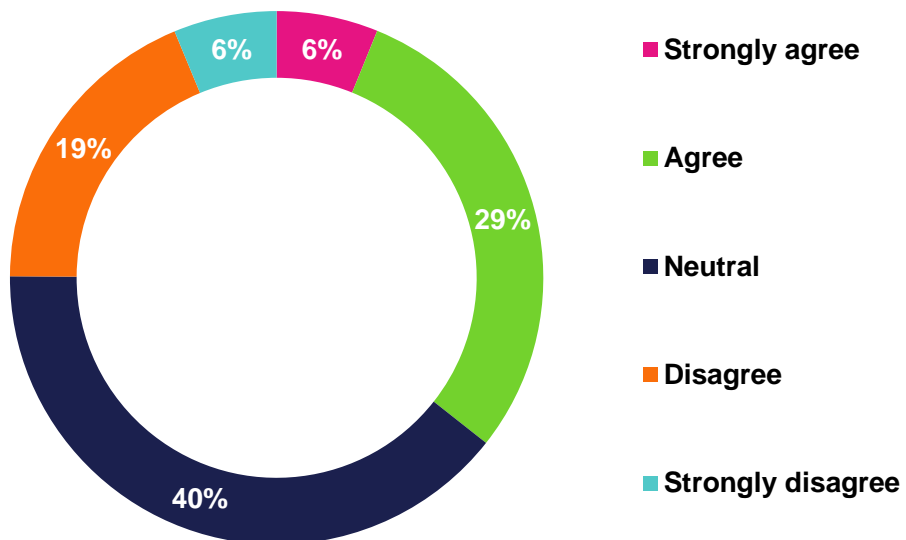


Question 7 – How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"What is currently being taught in school or college adequately prepares me, or has adequately prepared me, for later life and finding a job"

Total number of responses: 1,120

- Strongly Agree: **6.16% (69)**
- Agree: **29.46% (330)**
- Neutral: **39.46% (442)**
- Disagree: **18.66% (209)**
- Strongly disagree: **6.25% (70)**



Comments

- 9 young people argued that at present, they are only being taught how to pass exams, as opposed to preparation for later life and finding suitable work;
- 15 respondents felt that more could be done to improve what is currently being taught at school or college to help prepare them in their future endeavours;
- 331 young people stated that they feel adequately prepared for later life and finding a job. These reasons included acquiring the necessary skills employers look for in potential candidates, and the requisite qualifications to go to Further or Higher Education;
- 406 respondents argued that they did not feel adequately prepared for their later life and finding a job. Respondents cited that they had not received any practical help whatsoever in terms of achieving these objectives, which often involve writing CVs and covering letters, making applications or simple financial management.

Financial literacy was cited as the biggest skill respondents felt lacking in when answering this question, and they would like to have learnt more about mortgages, savings, investments and how to open a bank account.



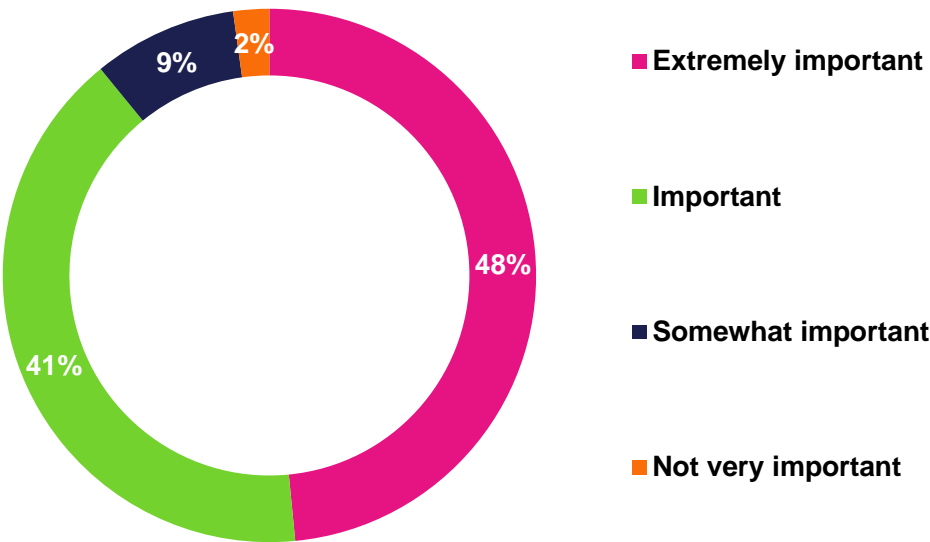
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Question 8 – Is it important that the qualifications young people in Wales achieve are respected and valued by potential employers, colleges and universities in other parts of the UK and the rest of the world?

Total number of responses: 1,100

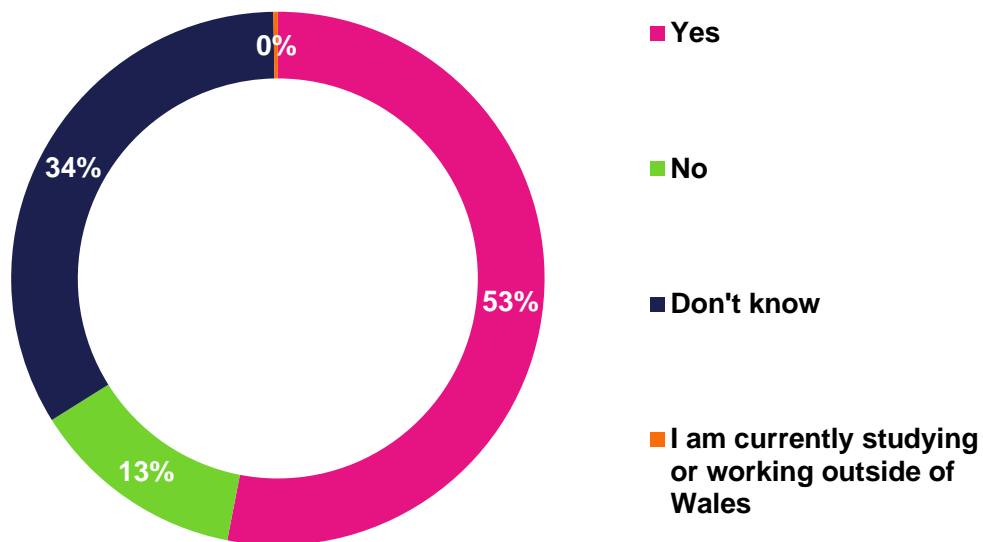
- Extremely important: **48.45% (533)**
- Important: **40.63% (447)**
- Somewhat important: **8.72% (96)**
- Not very important: **2.18% (24)**



Question 9 – Do you think you will want to study or work outside of Wales in future?

Total number of responses: 1,103

- Yes: **53.03% (585)**
- No: **13.05% (155)**
- Don't know: **33.63% (371)**
- I am currently working or studying outside of Wales: **0.27% (3)**

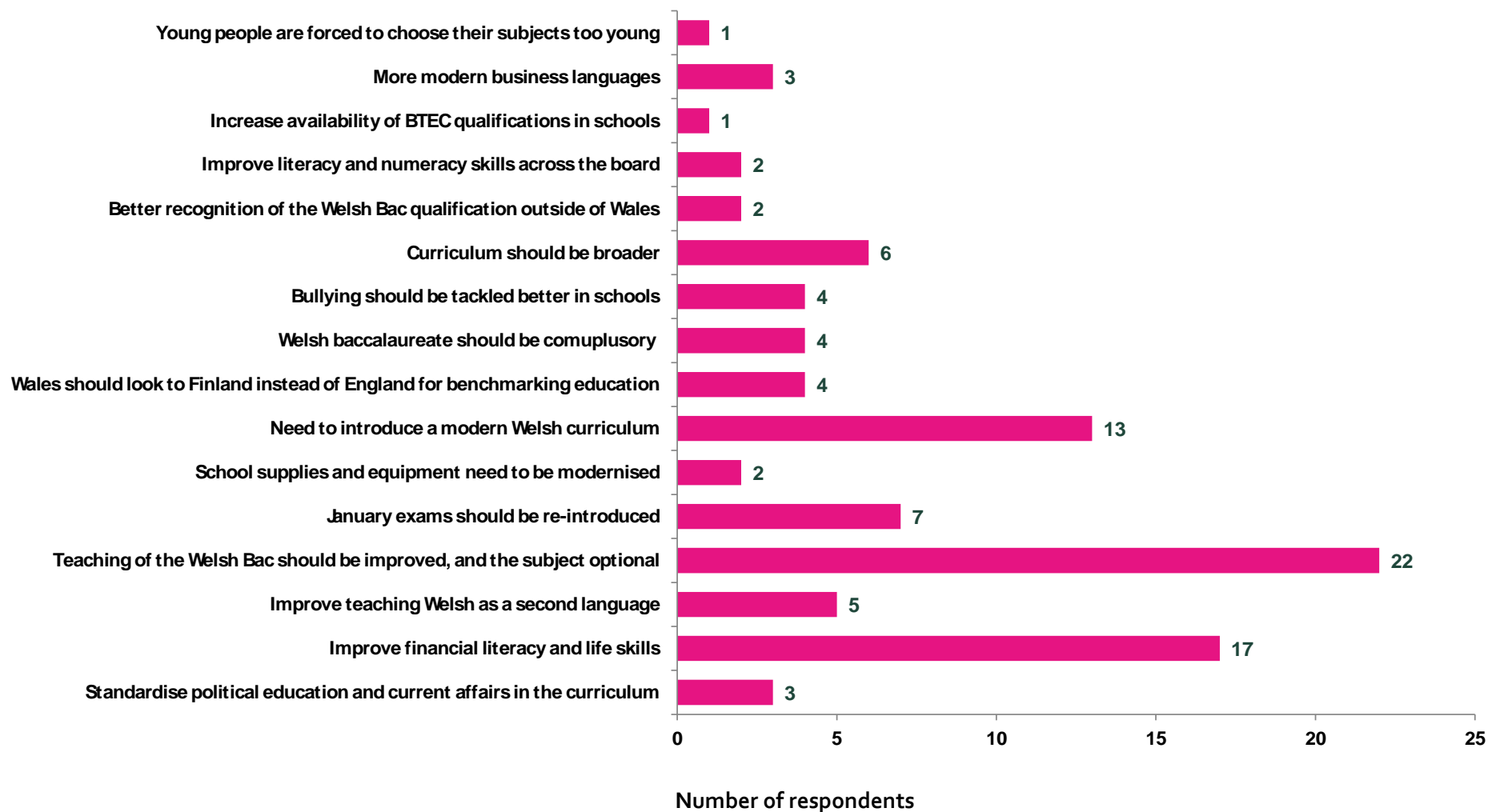


Comments

- 214 young people stated that they would like to study or work outside of Wales, whether within the UK or abroad;
- 17 respondents felt that this decision premised on their final grades;
- 81 young people argued that they would like to stay in Wales to work and/or study;
- 284 young people felt that they would have to work and/or study outside of Wales because there are more work opportunities and better Academic Institutions;
- 22 respondents argued that as Welsh speakers, they want to stay in Wales but may feel that they have to leave due to the work opportunities available to them;
- 6 young people stated that the courses they want to study at University/College were only available outside of Wales.



Question 10 – Do you have any other comments you wish to make about the curriculum and qualifications in Wales?



Question 11 – What is your home postcode?

Total number of responses: 754

CF: 4.0% (299) (South Wales Central)

CH: 1.48% (11) (North Wales)

LL: 23.6% (178) (North Wales / Mid and West Wales)

LD: 0.79% (6) (Mid and West Wales)

NP: 1.72% (13) (South Wales East)

SA: 33% (247) (South Wales West / Mid and West Wales)

SY: 3.05% (23) (Mid and West Wales)

