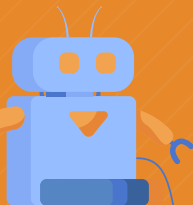




PROGRESS REPORT ON OUR WELL-BEING AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OBJECTIVES

SEPT 2021–30 AUG 2022



Progress Report on our Well-being and Future Generations Objectives Sept 2021-30 Aug 2022

1. Introduction

The Well-being of Future Generations Act and its 'ways of working' provide a framework for how we deliver our functions. Although we are not currently subject to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (FG Act), our role absolutely underpins its purpose. We have therefore adopted its principles. It is, after all, a natural way for us to work, given that education and qualifications planning requires a long lens into the future.

2. **Our Well-being of Future Generations objectives** are focused on where we can maximise our positive impact on the well-being goals. They contribute to a prosperous, sustainable and resilient Wales while supporting the well-being of our employees.

- **FG Objective 1: Supporting employers**

We will align our strategies for vocational and general qualifications to the future skills needs of Wales. Through vocational sector reviews, we will ensure that qualifications support the development of the knowledge and skills that employers in Wales require – both now and in the future.

- **FG Objective 2: Qualification content**

Where we commission or introduce new qualifications, we will consider whether there is benefit in encouraging awarding bodies to incorporate knowledge and understanding of sustainable development.

- **FG Objective 3: Supporting our workforce**

We will provide a working environment, and support a culture, that encourages healthy employee lifestyles and long-term well-being.

- **FG Objective 4: Collaboration**

We will work with partners across the public sector, both to support the qualifications system and to make use of opportunities for greater efficiency or effectiveness.

How we have delivered against our Well-being of Future Generations statement and objectives in 2020/21

Objective 1: Supporting employers

Our approach to Vocational Qualifications

Since 2015 we have taken a forward-looking approach to the identification of future skills needs in Wales through our programme of Sector Reviews. We engage extensively with employers to establish whether the qualifications taken by young people, particularly in further education and on apprenticeships, are delivering the skills and knowledge needed for those learners to thrive in employment. Sometimes, as a consequence of these reviews, we decide to commission new qualifications to specifically meet the needs of Wales. Where we do, we ensure that current best practice is at the heart of the new qualifications that result from our work. Examples include:

Travel, Tourism, Hospitality and Catering Sector Review

We began our fifth review in Travel, Tourism, Hospitality and Catering (TTHC), in spring 2021. In January 2023 we will publish the sector review report and commence actions to address its findings. In this review we:

- Held a series of interviews with over 145 stakeholders which included over 67 employers across Wales to determine the future knowledge and skills required for the industry in Wales;
- Worked collaboratively with stakeholders in our stakeholder advisory group with representatives from employers, learning providers and other interested bodies to provide us with advice and to test our lines of enquiry;
- Reviewed the current qualification content in 27 qualifications and identified content areas which can be updated. These include the impact of tourism on the environment, awareness of sustainability and the growth of eco and experiential tourism in Wales, food origin and supply; and
- Tested our findings and early proposals 52 workshops with both internal and external stakeholders; schools, further education, work-based learning, employers, sector bodies, awarding bodies, Welsh Government and contracted sector experts.

Phase 2 sector review: sport and public services qualifications

In September 2021, we published the findings of this review. It focused on the range of Welsh-medium qualifications available in full-time post-16 further education,

school sixth forms and apprenticeships for learners, learning providers and employers in the sport and public services sector.

We interviewed 49 employers, learning providers and wider stakeholders, and consulted with the awarding bodies who offer sport and public services qualifications in Wales. We also gathered the views of over 380 learners via an online questionnaire.

We identified that:

- most learning providers interviewed considered the range of qualifications for sport and public services to be sufficient to meet the needs of their learners and their centre and considered the qualifications available to be up to date.
- stakeholders believe that the qualifications available effectively prepare learners to progress to further study, higher education, apprenticeships and/or employment.
- a few learning providers said they would like a greater choice of qualifications.

We found that qualifications taken in Welsh are offered across a range of learning settings and identified some specific areas for further action. We saw examples of good practice where learning providers were collaborating to develop Welsh-medium resources.

You can read the full report [here](#). It sets out our actions we have already taken and future plans.

Phase 2 sector review: agriculture, horticulture and animal care

In July 2022, we published the findings of our sector review in agriculture, horticulture and animal care.

We interviewed 45 employers, learning providers and wider stakeholders, and consulted with the awarding bodies who offer these qualifications in Wales. We also gathered the views of 145 learners via an online questionnaire.

The review identified that most learning providers considered the current range of qualifications to be sufficient to meet the needs of their learners and their centre, but they expressed concerns that some qualifications were no longer available for learners in Wales. In response to these findings, we have grant funded City & Guilds and CIWM to address this. We are also working with City & Guilds to develop a suitable Welsh-medium level 3 agriculture qualification.

You can read the full report [here](#). It sets out actions that we have already taken future plans.

Learners aged 14- 16 – developing the full offer

Qualifications Wales (QW) has made a commitment to change qualifications for 14–16-year-olds in light of the introduction of the Curriculum for Wales. This commitment is being taken forward under the 'Qualified for the Future' project. As part of that work, we are considering what qualifications are needed over and above the GCSEs to provide a 'full offer'.

Over the past year we have conducted a review to establish what makes a coherent and inclusive qualification offer for this age group. Our work involved desk-based review work where we looked at numerous reports on the current and future needs of employers. We carried out extensive stakeholder engagement to establish current and future employer needs, including interviews and meetings with employers, Regional Skills Partnership, CBI, training providers and Careers Wales.

We have developed a set of proposals covering a set of pre-vocational qualifications, a suite of life and work-related skills qualifications, a project-based qualification, alongside qualifications for learners that are not yet ready to take a GCSE but who require solid foundations on which to build and to ensure they are not left behind. We consider that this approach will provide the rounded learners of today that will be employees and entrepreneurs of tomorrow.

Objective 2: Qualification content

Knowledge and understanding of sustainable development in reforms:

Learners aged 14-16

Sustainability will be embedded within the proposed content of new made-for-Wales GCSEs. Below are some specific examples which illustrate both the breadth of subjects and also the range of contexts through which sustainability will be considered.

GCSEs within the Humanities Area of the Curriculum

The idea of 'cynefin' (the place where we feel we belong) is central to the humanities area of the curriculum. Therefore, within the proposals for new **humanities GCSEs** 'cynefin' provides the opportunity for sustainability to be explored and contextualised within a learner's local community and geographic area, in addition to enabling consideration of this topic from a national and international perspective.

In **GCSE geography** learners will explore their inter relationship with the environment and consider the impacts of climate change. This qualification will also encourage learners to consider the steps they can take to create a sustainable future. **GCSE Business** considers sustainability within business including models that support the natural environment, sustainable supply chains and the concept of the circular economy. In **GCSE Religious Studies** learners will develop knowledge and understanding of religious and non-religious world views on sustainability and protecting the environment. The new **GCSE in Social Studies** will have protection of the environment and sustainability as one of its central themes, this will include exploration of carbon footprints and the differential impacts of climate change on different groups and communities.

GCSEs in other areas of the curriculum

Tackling climate change and achieving a sustainable future is one of the central themes within the **GCSE science** qualification. This will include coverage of topics such as the science of climate change and what can be done in response to climate change.

The new **GCSE in engineering** will cover the role engineering can play in creating a sustainable future through consideration of sustainability in relation to engineering materials, practices and processes.

The **food and nutrition GCSE** will cover sustainability in relation to food provenance and food production as well as reviewing the impact of food transportation and food miles on the environment.

Finally, the new **Mathematics and Numeracy GCSE** will contain contextual questions that are linked to societal and scientific contexts, meaning that in some exam questions learners will be applying their mathematics in contexts that relate to the theme of sustainability.

Learners post 16

We continued our approach to reform the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate for learners aged 16-19. This will require learners to develop and apply their skills in contexts based on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Wales' well-being goals. The qualification also helps learners consider their own personal goals and aspirations, their own future wellbeing and the wellbeing of others, in a more sustainable world. The learning contexts we have chosen support the rights contained in the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child by allowing young people to become more aware of the decision-making processes that affect them as informed, responsible and active citizens. This exciting new

qualification, the **Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales (Level 3)** has now been approved and is due to be introduced for first teaching in September 2023.

When we implement our **Travel, Tourism, Hospitality and Catering** review we will see changes in qualifications content to include the impact of tourism on the environment, awareness of sustainability and the growth of eco and experiential tourism in Wales, food origin and supply.

Objective 3: Supporting our workforce

Healthy employees and long-term well-being

The well-being of our workforce is very important to us. Qualifications Wales has 95 employees, of which 16 joined during the last twelve months. From July 2021 we piloted a voluntary return to the office in response to feedback. After a short suspension in December (following Government guidance) we returned in February. We confirmed our future hybrid working policy in April 2022.

During the period of uncertainty our priority was to ensure our employees continued to feel engaged, supported and informed. We undertook regular pulse surveys to understand our employees' feeling/concerns in relation to the pandemic, working from home and their well-being. We continued to provide initiatives to enable employees to engage with the organisation outside their immediate work area, including fortnightly all staff virtual gatherings and various virtual events. Where possible directorates got together outside for team activities. As we moved out of the winter lockdown we worked with employees and our union to identify how we wanted to work in the future. We wanted to retain a good work life balance and at the same time look after mental health and retain our inclusive culture.

We adopted the 4 Cs as the rationale for why we meet together – for creativity, collaboration, caring and community. This informed our hybrid working policy and we are in the process of making changes to the office layout to better support our new ways of working. In June 2022 we were delighted to be able to hold an all-employee sports/games session focused on team-building and getting to know new starters.

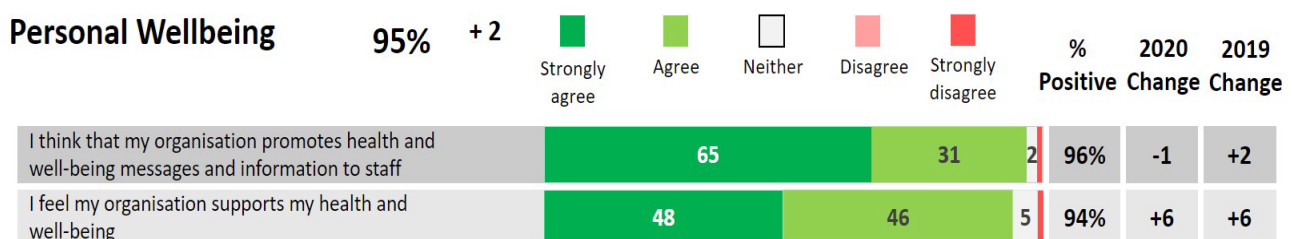
Our 'QWEST' (Qualifications Wales Equality and Social Responsibility Team) employee group continue to support well-being. This year they have promoted national health initiatives and encouraged social links using an App 'We+' initiative which enables teams of colleagues to compete and share fitness activities. We also gave employees two well-being hours and encouraged people to share photos of how they spent their time. QW achieved Bronze accreditation of the Corporate

Health Standard (CHS) in March 2019. The assessment report provided by Healthy Working Wales reviewed organisational support, employee engagement, managing health and safety, mental health and stress awareness, well-being and monitoring and evaluation and review. Once the programme is back in 2022, we will be working towards our Silver Health Standard.

Our Performance and Development policy encourages regular conversations about wellbeing. We provide a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme, and have trained staff as Mental Health First Aiders. Employees also have access to free eye tests and funded flu vaccination.

In our 2020/21 employee survey 96% agreed that the organisation promotes health and well-being messages and information, and 94% agreed that the organisation supported their own health and well-being.

In an internal audit of well-being we had substantial assurance with no recommendations.



Corporate Social Responsibility

We allow all employees to use a paid day on recognised corporate social activity. In previous years this has included local litter picks, supporting the local homeless drop-in centre, hosting a tea for older people and providing recordings of news and other articles for those with sight loss.

During remote working we had to reduce these activities, but are now offering an option for tree-planting with Newport Council, clearing woods and supporting the local initiative to change the infamous Road to Nowhere into the Road to Nature.

Objective 4: Collaboration

Supporting partners across the public sector

This was the second year of the Welsh Government Sponsored Body (WGSB) shared Leadership and Management programme, 'Thrive'. We established this in partnership

with Social Care Wales, HEFCW and Sport Wales, and it is open to any WGSB. Four cohorts have completed (with 10 QW staff joining those from other bodies) and six more are underway, four for Line Management Essentials, two for Strategic Leadership. A further Line Manager cohort will start in September. So far 26 staff have benefited. Feedback has been excellent, with the management programme allowing employees from smaller WGSB organisations to network and learn from peers.

We have continued to provide IT services and advice, under a service level agreement, to the National Academy for Educational Leadership (NAEL) and the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (LDBCW).

We support the WGSB professional networks – Heads of Resources, Finance, IT and HR are active members of these groups which seek to share best practice, encourage collaboration and consider ways in which we can work together more effectively.