

Education and Lifelong Learning Committee

Date: 29 June 2005
Time: 9.00am
Title : Minister's Report

This report updates the Committee on specific issues raised by members and on issues of current interest. **Annex A** sets out major engagements since the last report

1. Funding of Adult Learning and ESF funding post 2006

There are complex negotiations taking place at Member State level on the EU Commission's proposed draft regulations for a new round of Structural Funds programmes for 2007 – 2013. These negotiations commenced following the publication of the proposals in July 2004 and are being considered in parallel with negotiations on the EU budget which it is hoped will be concluded in June at the European Council meeting. However, negotiations may continue beyond June and possibly into 2006. The Welsh Assembly Government is fully involved in the negotiations taking place within the "Structural Actions Working Group", currently chaired by the Luxembourg Presidency of the EU, and is seeking the best possible outcome for Wales.

Adult learning is an important area of learning activity, which has received considerable financial support under current programmes, particularly from the European Social Fund (ESF). Under the proposed draft regulations for 2007 – 2013, ESF funding would continue to focus on: increasing the adaptability of workers and enterprises; enhancing access to employment and other employment assistance; reinforcing social inclusion; and promoting partnership for reform in employment and inclusion. Any new programmes would look to build upon the solid foundations already established by projects during the current round of funding.

With regard to continuity of funding, expenditure on individual projects can continue until mid 2008. If agreement can be reached soon, the proposed new round of Structural Funds programmes, if available in Wales, would commence on 1 January 2007. The priorities for any new programmes would be set by the strategic policy of the Skills & Employment Action Plan 2005, as well as the National Economic Development Strategy – "A Winning Wales".

I am well aware of possible continuity issues should any new programmes start late. The Welsh European Funding Office (WEFO) is addressing these issues as part of its post 2006 project plan. It is unlikely that WEFO will be able to pre-approve any projects prior to the new programmes starting, as the regulations do not allow this. However, WEFO will wish to discuss potential projects with sponsors ahead of formal approval of any new programmes in order to ensure a quick start to the programmes.

2. Implementation of New Higher Education Funding Arrangement

The agreement on tuition fees reached by the Assembly on 22 June will now give rise to work on a number of fronts. In particular we will:

- proceed with the devolution of student finance powers to Wales;
- commission advice from HEFCW on the funding gap identified by the Rees Report;
- take forward work on subjects which cannot be studied in Wales.
- develop the National Bursary Scheme;
- commission an independent review of part time students;
- respond to the detailed recommendation of the Rees report.

Devolution of Student Finance Powers

Devolving powers over student support and tuition fees to the National Assembly for Wales means that the Assembly can take a whole system view of policy, funding and delivery of higher and further education. As we demonstrated with the agreement struck last week the Assembly has been able to give certainty and confidence to Welsh institutions and students by using its newly devolved powers in the context of robust evidence based research undertaken by Professor Rees.

What devolution means for Welsh Students?

Student support delivered by Assembly led '*Student Finance Wales*', in collaboration with LEAs and the Student Loans Company rather than under the current Department for Education and Skills arrangements.

For Welsh domiciles student studying in Wales in AY 2006/7 this means:

- £1200 annual deferred fee (Assembly provides loan)
- Up to £2700 Assembly Learning Grant
- Maintenance Loan – in the range of around £3000 - £4000, depending on means testing and whether or not the student lives with parents or not.
- Loans do not need to be repaid until the graduate is earning £15000

For Welsh domiciles student studying in Wales in AY 2007/8 onwards this means:

- £3000 annual tuition fee reduced by £1800. Non means tested fee grant provided by the Assembly, reducing the fee loan to £1200 pa repayable on graduation once earnings threshold reaches £15,000.

- Up to £2700 Assembly Learning Grant
- Maintenance Loan – in the range of around £3000 - £4000, depending on means testing and whether or not the student lives with parents or not.
- May apply to National Bursary Scheme
- Loans do not need to be repaid until the graduate is earning £15000

For Welsh domiciles student studying in England in AY 2006/7 onwards this means:

- Up to £3000 annual deferred fee (Assembly provides loan)
- Up to £2700 Assembly Learning Grant
- Maintenance Loan – in the range of around £3500 - £4500, depending on means testing and whether or not the student is studying in London or elsewhere
- May apply for English HEI bursaries
- Loans do not need to be repaid until the graduate is earning £15000

Establishing the legal framework

To deliver these packages the Assembly needs to

- Make the Higher Education Act 2004 Commencement Order No.2 and AY 2006/7 fixed fee regulations on 6 July
- Make the AY2006/7 student finance regulations by January 2006. These will issue for consultation as soon as possible after the CO has been made and will come to ELL Committee in October following consultation. Thereafter there will be annual amendment regulations – it will be the AY2007/08 student finance amendment regulations that introduce the £1800 non-means tested fee grant which was agreed last week.
- Make the AY2007/8 tuition fee regulations. In order to be in place when universities publish their 2007/08 prospectuses in the spring of 2006 these regulations need to be in place by January 2006 and will come before the Committee in the Autumn

Funding Gap

The report from Professor Rees' working group identified a funding gap which affects the HE sector in Wales which we have agreed to consider further. Professor Rees' report identified a number of factors which contribute towards this gap in funding. This is a difficult area where comparisons between different parts of the United Kingdom are made more complicated by the increasingly diverse policies being pursued in each of the home countries.

We will commission advice from the Higher Education Funding Council on this matter.

Subjects unavailable in Wales.

There are a small number of courses which are not available at Welsh HEIs. Veterinary Science is the best known example. The resolution passed on 22 June commits the Assembly Government to finding a way of assisting students who are unable to pursue such courses. Party Leaders have agreed that the details of such a scheme will have to be carefully considered in order to comply with European Union non-discrimination legislation.

National Bursary Scheme

Officials have, on a contingency basis, already begun to explore the possible composition of a National Bursary Scheme with representatives of the HE sector in Wales. This work will now be taken forward so that the essential aspects of such a scheme can be in place for autumn 2007/08. It would be important for the scheme to be devised jointly with sector given that the bursaries made available from HEIs will become increasingly prominent aspects of the competition which now exists in the Higher Education Sector.

Review of Part Time Students

I am currently considering the practical issues which surround commissioning a review of part time student issues as recommended by Professor Rees. I have it in mind that this will be a task and finish group with an independent chair asked to report by next spring. I will keep members of the committee up to date with developments on this subject over the coming weeks.

Government Response to Rees

The report from Professor Rees' working group contains a large number of detailed recommendations in addition to those relating to tuition fees. Those recommendations were derived from the evidence collected by the review group and the detailed analysis to which this evidence was subjected. I am anxious that the Assembly Government should provide a considered response to each of these recommendations. I will want to present this detailed response to the committee at the earliest possible opportunity.

3a. ACCAC and ELWa Merger – Progress Report

The Extranet facility, to support shared communication with the staffs of the three organisations on the merger, went live on 9 June.

The Deployment Protocol, setting out the procedures to be used in transferring staff into the new departmental structures, was issued on 11 June. An 8 week consultation with staff on the protocol is now underway. As part of the Protocol, a Felt Fair Committee has been established across all the merging organisations to ensure that posts are filled in a fair and open way.

The Joint Senior Teams of DfTE, ELWa and ACCAC met on 16 June. They were joined by branch head representatives from the three organisations and discussed priorities for the new Department and organisational development.

High level structures for all departments affected by the mergers (except Communications and Marketing) were announced on 21 June. The structures indicate the senior posts in each department and include a brief description of the purpose of each post. Further details will be available by mid July, once the Felt Fair Committee have considered the evaluated grade.

Work is currently ongoing within ACCAC, ELWa and DfTE on draft structures below divisional level, which are due to be published in the week beginning 4 July, in as much detail as possible at that stage. The detailed structure will be subject to an 8 week consultation process with staff and Trade Unions. Individual preference meetings with staff will start from October onwards to discuss personal preferences within the new structures. The Felt Fair Committee will meet from mid October onwards to assign people into posts, taking into account personal preferences.

From October onwards, posts in the new structures will start to be populated on an individual or team/departmental basis.

3b ASPB Mergers: Update on the Legislative Process

The Plenary debate on the WDA, ELWa and WTB merger consultation responses took place on 8 June; the responses report was published on the Assembly website on 24 May. The consultation on the draft legislation needed to enact the mergers was also published on 24 May.

The public consultation on the draft orders to enable the merger of the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (ELWa), the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC), the Welsh Development Agency and the Wales Tourist Board with the National Assembly started on 24 May and will end on 15 July.

Powers to transfer ASPB functions and abolition

Section 28 of the Government of Wales Act 1998 gives the National Assembly for Wales (“the National Assembly”) powers with respect to the structure of certain public bodies in Wales listed in Schedule 4 of that Act. It provides that the National Assembly may transfer the functions of some of those bodies to another such body, to a Welsh local authority or to itself; and that it may abolish such bodies where all their functions have been transferred.

Orders have been drafted to provide for the transfer of functions, property, rights and liabilities (including staff) from the merging bodies to the National Assembly and for the abolition of those bodies. They also provide for consequential amendments to primary and secondary legislation.

Consultation Process

A public consultation on the draft Orders commenced on 24 May 2005 and will last for seven weeks, ending on 15 July 2005. The draft Orders are likely to be subject to further revisions as a result of the consultation process.

Following the summer recess the draft Orders (amended as necessary) will be subject to formal scrutiny by the relevant Subject Committees before being submitted to Business Committee to commence the process under Standing Order 24. They will then be considered by the Legislation Committee before proceeding to Plenary for consideration.

The ELL Committee will have an opportunity to scrutinise the draft order at the September 21st meeting.

The Orders

The general principle adopted in the drafting is to transfer functions by effecting minimal legislative change consistent with facilitating the improvements to delivery of services that underpin the merger of ACCAC and ELWa with the Assembly. Changes have been made where appropriate that are consequential, incidental, supplementary or transitional to the transfer of functions. In particular, references to the functions of "the Secretary of State" have been amended to functions of "the Assembly" on the face of relevant Acts where appropriate so as to reflect the effect of the National Assembly for Wales (Transfer of Functions) Order 1999 (SI 1999/672).

Regulatory Appraisal

A common draft Regulatory Appraisal of the likely costs and benefits of complying with the draft Order has been prepared to accompany the draft Orders as part of the consultation. It also covers the draft Orders for the transfer of functions and abolition of the merging bodies. Individual Regulatory Appraisals and Explanatory Memoranda will be drafted to accompany the draft Orders when they are scrutinised by the Committee after the summer recess.

4. Update on Attendance Benchmarking

I am happy to advise the committee that an attendance benchmarking system was introduced to secondary schools in Wales at the end of May.

The attendance benchmarking uses a model based on the entitlement to free school meal (FSM) indicator, and will allow secondary schools in Wales to look at their attendance levels and compare them against what they are predicted to achieve according to the model.

The attendance benchmarking model has been created using the % of pupils entitled to free school meals and the actual % of half-day sessions attended at each school during the 2003/04 academic year.

Those schools, whose attendance is significantly lower than the level predicted by the model, have been asked to work closely with their local education authority to focus on their attendance. Those schools where attendance is significantly above the predicted benchmarked level have been asked to share their good practice so that others might benefit.

We have provided each LEA with benchmarking data relating to schools within their authority. Benchmarking information has also been made available to Estyn, which can then be used to supplement existing attendance data to help inspection teams reach a judgement on the attendance level within a school.

I intend the benchmarking information to be of real use to schools and LEAs in the drive to improve attendance and as such we have invited schools to feedback on the effectiveness of this approach. I will be happy to advise the committee of any issues raised as a result of this feedback.

5. The Welsh Assembly Government School Uniform Grant Scheme

I reported to Members at the last meeting on 8 June that I had honoured the commitment I had given to the Assembly in response to the Huw Lewis Motion of 4 June 2003 in relation to the introduction of an all Wales minimum grant scheme for the purchase of school uniform. I confirmed that funding of £750,000 has been made available in 2005-06 and in each of the following two financial years for this purpose.

Consultation on the operation of the scheme commenced on 12 April 2005, with the closing date for responses 26 May 2005. 29 responses to the consultation were received: 18 from LEAs; 4 from headteachers, 2 from school staff and from Estyn, NUT; End Child Poverty Network Cymru (C/O Children in Wales); Citizens Advice Bureau; and the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

As a consequence of comments made in response to the consultation, some changes to the grant scheme arrangements have been made but, with one exception, these relate to the detail of administration rather than the broad policy of the scheme. The one key change I have made relates to eligibility to grant.

It was proposed in the consultation document that pupils entering Year 7 in a maintained school in Wales and with an existing eligibility to free school meals would qualify for a grant; as would pupils in special schools. The eligibility criteria has been expanded to include pupils in special needs resource bases and pupil referral units with an existing eligibility for free school meals who are aged 11 at the start of the 2005/06 school year and each subsequent year.

Following consultation, the key elements of the scheme are therefore that:

- LEAs will administer the Assembly's grant scheme which will be introduced for the 2005/06 school year;

- eligibility for grant will be based on existing entitlement to free school meals;
- the level of grant will be £85 per eligible pupil;
- grants will be targeted at Year 6 pupils moving into secondary school as this move has the most significant impact on families in terms of school uniform purchase;
- The grant will also be available to pupils in special schools, special needs resource bases and pupil referral units who are aged 11 at the start of the 2005/06 school year and have an existing entitlement to free school meals.

I formally launched the scheme on 22 June at Afon Taff High School, Merthyr Tydfil. Leaflets publicising the scheme have been distributed to all Year 6 pupils in maintained schools in Wales and to all the relevant aged pupils in special needs resource bases and pupil referral units, so that applications can be made to local education authorities and grant paid to qualifying families in time to purchase uniform for the start of the new school year in September 2005.

Guidance to LEAs on the administration of the scheme has also been produced.

6. Update on Common Investment Fund (CIF)

The Committee is aware that I attended the launch of ELWa's CIF at Coleg Glan Hafren with ELWa's Chairman on 11 March 2005. Since then ELWa has worked closely with LEAs and FE institutions, to develop collaborative projects for the benefit of post-16 learners.

ELWa has received 121 proposals, of which 85 have satisfied the eligibility criteria. These have been worked up into detailed proposals that ELWa has approved. They account for some £4.5m of the £6m available during 2005-06 and the initial benefits will become apparent during the coming academic year. ELWa is working with LEAs and FEIs to refine the remaining proposals and these will be approved when they meet the eligibility criteria. .

I am delighted that there has been such a positive response to the CIF. Proposals have been submitted from across Wales. There are many encouraging examples of LEAs and FEIs working together to pool their expertise and resources. Project proposals will improve choice and support for learners, help develop the provider network, and will enable providers to make good use of resources and expertise through collaborative working. They include: e-learning, basic and key skills, curriculum development, bilingual learning, community learning, staff development, sharing good practice and striving for improvements to attainment and outcomes.

The Assembly Government is committed to collaborative working. ELWa and thereafter the new Department will look to develop the work begun by the CIF and to maintain the gathering momentum into future years. In the meantime, ELWa has also begun work with ADEW and Fforwm to consider Wales-wide proposals

7. Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship

At the December ELL meeting I undertook to advise the Committee on the monitoring undertaken by ELWa of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship in the FE sector.

ELWa is a member of the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship advisory panel, which is chaired by the Welsh Assembly Government and which includes stakeholders from across the education sector. This panel is currently preparing a strategy on developing awareness and actions on these topics across education and is planning to develop resources that will help education providers to put sustainable development and global citizenship at the heart of their activities. ELWa will continue to work with providers to develop and monitor activities in this area, working with the strategy that comes from the advisory panel in due course.

8. Wales Employment Advisory Panel - First annual report

The Wales Employment Advisory Panel, established in March 2004, is an Assembly Advisory Panel which provides advice to the Welsh Assembly Government on the development and implementation of Welfare to Work programmes (including the New Deal), in respect of their impact within Wales.

The Panel's main role is to help shape Welfare to Work provision to meet the particular circumstances and needs of communities and people across Wales, ensuring that the activities of Jobcentre Plus complement the policies and programmes of the Welsh Assembly Government. The Panel also contributes to the Assembly Government's work on raising economic activity levels throughout Wales.

In accordance with one of the main provisions of its remit, the Panel has recently compiled its first annual report on its work, to the Welsh Assembly Government. The report covers the period March 2004 – March 2005, providing an assessment of progress made against the remit, and highlighting the Panel's future work priorities.

The Panel has spent its first year of operation consolidating knowledge of the economic issues facing Wales, taking stock of the full range of employment measures already in place and planned for the near future. In reaching the conclusions set out in its report, the Panel has looked to highlight the key issues to be addressed, to help raise levels of employment and economic activity in Wales.

As a result of this work, the Panel has identified the following key areas, for its forward work programme:

skills agenda - looking at measures to raise skills levels, with particular emphasis on ways of improving engagement with young people moving through secondary education, and with children in early years education;

engagement with the health sector – developing support for people who have work-limiting health conditions, but who would nonetheless like to make the transition into employment;

partnership working - developing more effective partnership approaches in relation to the training and employment agenda, involving all key partners such as Jobcentre Plus Wales, ELWa, WDA and Careers Wales;

interface with Jobcentre Plus Wales – monitoring the work of Jobcentre Plus in Wales, particularly in light of the ongoing and intensive modernisation programme to the services and operations of DWP and Jobcentre Plus throughout GB, and the consequent potential impact on capacity and resources.

9. Estyn's Annual Remit.

Estyn's work supports the vision and strategic direction set by the Welsh Assembly Government. We, therefore, look to Estyn to play a full role in the development of the evidence base that underpins ongoing action to improve the quality of learning and the standards achieved by learners. Estyn's Annual Remit (attached at Annex B) provides guidance on the Welsh Assembly Government's priorities and key objectives with a view to pinpointing the areas where Estyn is commissioned to provide specialist advice to inform policy review and development. This work can take a number of forms ranging from contributions to working groups, provision of position papers and full reports drawing on evidence collated as part of fieldwork.

After submission to the Assembly, position papers, reports and surveys are published on Estyn's website (www.estyn.gov.uk) with some also published in hard copy for dissemination to schools, colleges, training providers and other partners as appropriate. Given that the Inspectorate makes an important contribution to the evidence base for the Learning Country programme, I propose to provide committee members with details of the reports compiled by Estyn. The first, at annex C, covers the reports submitted in the period from December 2004 to May 2005. Further summaries will be provided for committee in the autumn and spring terms.

10. THE DRAFT STAFFING OF MAINTAINED SCHOOLS (WALES) REGULATIONS 2006

Sections 35, 36 and 37 of the Education Act 2002 when commenced will replace current school staffing provisions in Sections 54 to 57 and Schedules 16 and 17 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Act. The provisions allow the Assembly to make regulations covering staffing issues in all maintained schools in place of the present provisions in the 1998 Act. The intended date for these regulations to be made is February 2006.

Current evidence indicates that the existing staffing provisions in the 1998 Act covering the appointment and dismissal of staff, staff grievance, staff discipline and capability procedures and the use of suspension, are working effectively and the new regulations have therefore been drafted on the basis of minimum change. They will be issued for consultation in July with a response date of 28 October 2005.

There are some minor changes to the existing provisions. The new regulations will:

- apply to staff engaged by the governing body or employed by the LEA to provide community services and facilities at the school;
- apply to nursery school governing bodies when they are established under the Government of Maintained schools (Wales) Regulations 2005 which are due to be made on 31 October 2005;
- clarify that where the chief Education Officer has a role in staffing matters he/she may send a representative.

There are 2 new provisions in the draft regulations to address recommendations in the Children's Commissioner's Clywch Report on investigation and hearing of cases involving allegations of child abuse against staff – that is cases where action falls to the Governing Body because there is a decision not to prosecute or prosecution fails or the matter is less serious.

In my report to plenary on the updated position on the implementation of the Clywch recommendations on 13 April 2005 I explained that the regulations would require a governing body in dealing with these cases to appoint an independent investigator and to appoint an independent non governor member to each of the staff disciplinary and disciplinary appeals committees. The draft regulations propose that these independent members should have voting rights.

In my statement to plenary on 13 April 2005 I explained the reasons why we were not able to accept the Commissioner's proposals for independent tribunals – namely:

- Responsibility for school staff disciplinary procedures rests with a governing body, removal of that responsibility would require primary legislation;

- Any change of this kind would cut across responsibilities on employers for disciplinary action in accordance with employment law;
- The proposal did not command support from the representatives of local authorities, teacher and other staff unions and Governors Wales.

The Children's Commissioner has indicated his support for both the independent investigation and independent member proposals, but has made it clear that since the latter is an alternative to his recommendation for 4 independent tribunals, he is only prepared to support it if independent members have voting rights.

I propose that the Welsh Assembly Government would fund and establish an independent investigation service. Given that the number of disciplinary cases against school staff involving allegations of child abuse are relatively few and those falling to governing bodies to consider even fewer, the cost of the service could be in the region of £150,000 per year.

It is expected that any cost to a governing body appointing independent members of the disciplinary and disciplinary appeal committees for these cases would be offset by not having to pay for an independent investigation.

It is envisaged that the arrangements would be in place in 2006-07.

Minister's Engagements 8th June-29th June

9th June

Visit- University of Wales, Lampeter

13th June

Visit Colcot Primary School, Barry to present Merit Awards

MTG with National Union of Students NafW

Visit to University of Wales Institute, Cardiff,

MTG - National Training Federation NafW

MTG- with Wendy Hawkins (Clybiau Plant Cymru) NafW

MTG - Voluntary Sector Partnership, NafW

SPCH -Launch of Raise your Game Website, Sports Council for Wales, Cardiff

14th June

MTG- Association of College Managers, NafW

SPCH - QAA HE Conference, Hilton Hotel, Cardiff

MTG with NIACE Cymru, NafW

16th June

SPCH- EARLALL Conference, Committee of the Regions Building Belliard 101, Meeting Room BEL 51 Brussels

20th June

SPCH- Teaching & Learning Research Programme Event, Marriott Hotel, Cardiff

MTG- Mr & Mrs Cunningham-Jones ' Stuart's Campaign', NafW

21st June

SPCH- Opening of Fairwater High School Language and Communication support base, Fairwater High School, Cwmbran

22nd June

MTG- ELWa National Review Council, NafW

SPCH Launch of the Integrated Children's Centre, Merthyr Tydfil

SPCH- Launch of Welsh Assembly Government school uniform grant scheme, Afon Taf High School, Merthyr Tydfil

23rd June

SCPH- Integrated Early Years Centre, Rhydfelen

SCPH-HEFCW Bologna conference, Angel Hotel, Cardiff

SPCH- Teaching Awards, City Hall, Cardiff

MTG- Chwarae Teg, NafW

Photocall University of Wales Aberystwyth Centre for Educational Studies, promotion of resources for Welsh medium education event, Wales Millennium Centre

27th June

SPCH- Chinese Ministry of Education Higher Education Leaders Dinner, Cardiff University

28th June

MTG- Future Skills Wales Partners on Skills and Employment Action Plan 2005, NafW

Jane Davidson AM

Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning
Gweinidog dros Addysg a Dysgu Gydol-Oes



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9 March 2004

ESTYN: REMIT FOR 2004-05.

I am writing to set out the remit for Estyn in the 2004-05 financial year.

I very much value the advice provided by Estyn on standards and the quality of education and training. In particular I was pleased to see the conclusion in your recent annual report that the quality of provision has risen in all areas and that, in most sectors, the standards achieved by learners continue to rise. The evidence base developed by Estyn plays an important role in confirming that we are firmly on track to realise our commitments in The Learning Country.

In the coming year I will look to Estyn to continue to work closely with officials in DfTE to provide a solid platform for evidence based policymaking. The remit is, therefore, provided to inform your planning and, in particular, the Corporate Plan for the period 2004-07 and the Operational Plan for 2004-05. In the production of your plan you will need to consult, where appropriate, with key partners including ACCAC and ELWa in laying the groundwork for the advice to be provided in both 2004-05 and 2005-06.

You should be aware that the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee might want to consider, in the autumn, the priorities set out in your corporate plan. In addition, it is possible that the Committee may depute one or two of its members to meet you beforehand to gain a better understanding of the Plan. Committee arrangements are in the hands of the Secretariat but officials in DfTE will be able to advise on the practicalities.



BUDDSODDWR Mewn Pobl
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

I know that this is an area that has been given considerable attention in recent years as part of the move to a rolling 3-year corporate plan. This has included ensuring that the plan complements The Learning Country programme and reflects the Assembly's commitment to equality of opportunity, sustainable development and social justice. However, it is important that our planning processes continue to dovetail effectively and I have, therefore, asked officials to keep this area under review and discuss with you any action needed to ensure that plans and processes are in step. I will also ask my officials to continue to work with you in managing the delivery of the remit.

I look forward to receipt of your corporate plan. As in previous years a copy of this letter and the attached remit will be passed to the members of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee for information.

Many Thanks

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Jane Davidson'.

Jane Davidson AM

Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning
Gweinidog dros Addysg a Dysgu Gydol-Oes

Enc The remit for the Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales for 2004-05.

THE REMIT FOR THE CHIEF INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN WALES FOR 2004- 05.

1.1 This remit provides guidance, approved by the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, on priorities and key objectives to inform the development of Estyn's strategic and operational planning in the period 2004-07.

1.2. The remit sets out the areas where the Department for Training and Education will require advice from Estyn in 2004-05 under the following headings:

- **Sound Foundations – Early Years and Key Stages 1-3** (paras 1.8- 1.10)
- **Learning for 14-19 year olds and lifelong learning** (paras 1.11 – 1.14);
- **Practice and Practitioners** (paras 1.15 – 1.17);
- **Cross Phase Issues** (paras 1.18- 1.20);
- **Other issues** (paras 1.21 –1.24);
- **Initial guidance on areas where advice will be required in 2005-06** (para 1.25).

1.3. Estyn is also remitted to put any necessary preparatory work in hand during 2004-05 for the work set out at para 1.25 to be undertaken in 2005-06.

Guidance on priorities to be addressed by Estyn in strategic planning and operational planning – 2004-07.

1.4. This document provides guidance on the key areas for attention by Estyn. Its purpose is to help inform strategic and operational planning undertaken by Estyn and, in particular, the production of the Corporate Plan for the period 2004-07 and the operational plan for 2004-05. In the planning and the delivery of the work set out in this document for 2004-05 Estyn will need to consult, where appropriate, with key partners including ACCAC and ELWa.

1.5. The Inspectorate's work is undertaken in the context of the strategic direction established by the Welsh Assembly Government in **Wales: A Better Country** and, in particular, the Government's vision of a fairer, more prosperous, healthier and better educated country, rooted in a commitment to social justice and to putting health and wealth creation that is sustainable at the heart of policy making.

1.6. Estyn has an important role in realising the commitments in **Wales: A Better Country** which itself reflects the strategy for the promotion of lifelong learning set out in **The Learning Country**. The aim is to ensure that education and training contributes to personal fulfilment, wealth creation, social cohesion and cultural development so that:

- everyone has the skills and qualifications to find work in the modern job market;
- no-one now outside the workforce is unequipped for work;
- no-one inside the workforce is unequipped for the new challenges of the economy;
- the skills and abilities of the population increase; and

- Wales is able to attract the kind of high value employment that is needed to fulfil our vision.

1.7. Together with the Department for Training and Education, the Minister looks to Estyn to provide sound evidence as a contribution to the development and implementation of policy for education and lifelong learning in Wales.

Sound Foundations – Early Years and Key Stages 1-3.

1.8. We aim to provide every child with a flying start in life. In effect this means that there must be excellent schools and the highest possible expectations for all our children. In its **strategic planning for 2004-07** Estyn is remitted to give specific attention to work that will support the drive to realise:

- firm foundations for early years learning;
- better transition between primary and secondary schools;
- higher standards in Key Stage 3;
- the development of pathways for learning through the medium of Welsh.

1.9. Overall, Estyn is remitted to provide advice, where requested by DfTE, to support the development and implementation of the **Foundation Phase**, the **Review of the National Curriculum**, action under **laith Pawb**, implementation of the **Attendance Action Plan** and the delivery of **Community Focused Schools**.

Advice required in 2004-05 to be presented as position papers.

1. Piloting of alternative entry points to Welsh medium and bilingual education.
2. Contribution made by the Basic Skills Quality Mark to raising standards of literacy and numeracy in schools.
3. Implementation by schools of the guidance on Substance Misuse Education – progress made to date.
4. Implementation by schools of the guidance on Sex and Relationships – progress made to date.
5. Contribution of Mathcymru to the promotion of mathematics to young people in schools.
6. Implementation by schools of ACCAC guidance on Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig issued in Sept 2003 - building to a full good practice survey in 2005-06.
7. Progress made by schools in addressing areas for improvement identified in Aiming for Excellence – building to a full survey report in 2005-06
8. Implementation of the key recommendations in the PE and School Action Plan – progress to date - building to a full survey report in 2005-06.

Surveys to be undertaken in 2004-05

9. LEA strategies to challenge and support schools with weaknesses or where pupils are underachieving or where higher standards could be achieved for larger numbers of pupils.
10. Effective learning at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 – to produce a best practice guide as part of the Aiming for Excellence programme.

11. Strategies employed by Local Authority Behaviour Support Services – good practice guide.
12. Pupil Referral Units - detail of thematic survey to be agreed with DfTE.
13. Good practice in management by schools of provision for PE and Outdoor Activities– including guidance on risk assessment.
14. Implementation of ACCAC guidance (2001) on the promotion of equal opportunities and diversity and the effectiveness of school and LEAs in meeting statutory duties under Race Relations legislation.

1.10. In addition, Estyn is requested to provide advice and support to the following working groups through representation and contributions to working papers where appropriate

- ICT Advisory Panel
- Global Citizenship Working Group
- Foundation Phase Working Group
- National Curriculum Review Working Group
- Education for Sustainable Development Group
- Modern Languages KS2 Pilot working group
- Narrowing the Gap Working Group
- Youth Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Strategy Working Group
- Advisory Group on Attendance Strategy and Practice
- Aiming for Excellence Working Group
- PE and School Sport Steering Group
- Alternative Entry Points to Welsh Medium and Bilingual Education Working Group
- Wales Advisory Group for Special Educational Needs

Lifelong Learning: Learning for 14-19 year olds and lifelong learning.

1.11. The aim is for Wales to be a Learning Country in which learning is an everyday part of working and non-working life and where the needs of learners come first. In its **strategic planning for 2004-07** Estyn is asked to give specific attention to work that will support the drive to:

- transform provision for 14-19 year olds;
- institute better services for young people;
- remove barriers and promote greater access to learning;
- develop strategies to tackle the skills deficit;
- improve opportunities for learning through the medium of Welsh;
- strengthen links between business and learning.

1.12. To support this Estyn is remitted to provide advice, where requested by DfTE, to support the development and implementation of the **14-19 Learning Pathways** programme, the **Extending Entitlement** agenda and the forthcoming **Skills and Employment Action Plan**.

1.13. **Under Performing Schools.** While the overall quality of teaching and the standards achieved by pupils in primary and secondary schools continues to improve, it is clear that improvements being made in the primary sector are not always sustained in Key Stages 3 and 4. Building on the progress made in 2003-04 Estyn should give priority to **those secondary schools where**

evidence suggests that there is under-performance or where more could be done to raise standards and expectations for a larger number of pupils. In undertaking this work, Estyn should work with Local Authorities to evaluate the effectiveness of their work to challenge and support under-performing schools.

Advice required in 2004-05 to be presented as position papers.

15. Barriers to completion of full training frameworks by learners in work based training
16. Learning provision for young people within the criminal justice system
17. Support for ELWa, HEFCW and ACCAC for the future development and implementation of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales and, in particular, consider with these bodies the quality systems required for the Framework.

Surveys to be undertaken in 2004-05

18. Quality and standards of Ufi/Learndirect programmes delivered in Wales
19. An area review of post-16 provision (excluding HE) by agreement with DfTE and ELWa as to scope, location and timing.
20. Provision for basic skills in work based training – with particular reference to the impact of the National Support Project.
21. Quality of provision for post 16 learners with disabilities in mainstream provision.
22. Union Learning representatives – study of effectiveness of training and role.
23. A review of the factors influencing the capacity of schools to offer quality post 16 provision that meets the reasonable aspirations of learners having regard to equality of opportunity and efficiency.

1.14. In addition, Estyn is requested to provide advice and support to the following working groups through representation and contributions to working papers where appropriate.

- Welsh Baccalaureate steering and contract monitoring groups.
- Key Skills Support Programme Cymru.
- Learning Pathways 14-19 Working Groups.
- All Age Skills Programme Development.
- Key Skills in work based training.
- National Basic Skills Strategy steering group.
- Copenhagen Working Group on Quality in Vocational Education.
- National Council Framework approval and advisory group (refocusing of MASDA group).
- Policy Reference Group - Credit and Qualifications for Wales.
- All Wales Young Peoples' Organisation
- Youth Justice Board Education Implementation Group.
- CAD/CAM Secondary Schools Initiative Steering Group.
- ELWa Group on E-Learning.
- ELWa Review of Work Based Learning.
- Future Skills Wales.

Practice and Practitioners

1.15. A central feature of The Learning Country is the commitment to make Wales an outstanding place in which to teach as well as learn. In its **strategic planning for 2004-07** Estyn is asked to give specific attention to work that will support the drive to:

- attract high quality entrants to teaching;
- provide stronger support for practitioners including induction and early professional development;
- reduce bureaucratic burdens on schools and teachers;
- reduce teachers' workload.

1.16. To support this Estyn is remitted to provide advice, where requested by DfTE, to support the further development and implementation of the **National Professional Qualification for Headteachers, the National Headship Development Programme and Induction and Early Professional Development**.

Advice required in 2004-05 to be presented as position papers.

24. The linkages between Continuing Professional Development, school development plans, performance management and raising standards.

25. Provision of Initial Teacher Training in line with DfTE and HEFCW priorities.

Surveys to be undertaken in 2004-05.

26. Quality and standards of initial training for part-time youth workers.

27. Adult basic skills – quality of teaching and training for teachers.

28. NQT induction and Early Professional Development

1.17. In addition, Estyn is requested to provide advice and support to the following working groups through representation and contributions to working papers where appropriate.

- NPQH Project Board on the mandatory qualification.
- Early Professional Development Partnership Group

Cross Phase Issues.

Compendium of good practice

1.18. Estyn makes a key contribution to the development of the evidence base to inform the formulation and evaluation of policy on education and lifelong learning. Much of this evidence is already made widely available through reports placed on both the Estyn (www.estyn.gov.uk) and the Welsh Assembly Government websites (www.learning.wales.gov.uk). In addition, the annual report of the Chief Inspector provides a vital source of information on quality and standards of education and training in Wales.

1.19. The Department for Training and Education will also look to Estyn to add to this through the preparation of an electronic **compendium of good practice** identified in the course of studies and inspections. Working with

NGFL Cymru, Estyn will encourage networks of practitioners to make use of this on-line resource to ensure that good practice is made available to partners across Wales.

Learning and equality of opportunity

1.20. In the delivery of inspection of schools the Welsh Assembly Government will look to work with Estyn to address the proposals on learning and equality of opportunity contained in The Learning Country and the recommendations of the Assembly's Education Working Party Report on the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry and the new responsibilities on LEAs, schools and further education institutions to plan for disabled access. In particular, attention must be given to the Race Relations Act 2000 as it applies to the education and training sectors through:

- monitoring the attainments of pupils from black and ethnic minority communities;
- developing whole school strategies to tackle racism;
- monitoring by Local Education Authorities of the patterns and frequency with which racist incidents occur at a school by school level and providing the Department with access to this information.

Other areas on which the Department for Training and Education may require advice

1.21. Estyn also provides both ad hoc advice and ongoing support for assessment of plans submitted by local authorities. In 2004-05 the Department for Training and Education will again require contributions and support in the following areas:

29. Education Strategic Plans
30. Better Schools Fund
31. Voluntary Aided Schools Capital Programme.
32. Ministerial School Visits.
33. School closure or reorganisation proposals
34. Schools causing concern
35. Governor training
36. Ad hoc issues as they arise; including Assembly Questions, appointments to committees of ASBPs and implementation of the provisions in the Education Act 2002

Wales Programme for Improvement.

1.22. Estyn is invited to provide advice and support to the Assembly Government, including the WPI Improvement Board, on the implementation of the new requirements for the Wales Programme for Improvement and the establishment of effective partnerships and working practices to underpin the new arrangements.

Statement of Arrangements

1.23. Estyn also undertakes, at the request of DfTE, inspections of the standard and quality of provision made by **Careers Wales** and **Youth Support Services**. The detail of what is required is set out, in each case, in a statement of arrangements with the lead DfTE division that is reviewed and updated on a regular basis. A similar arrangement will be put in place for inspection of **Independent Schools**.

Work commissioned as part of the 2003-04 remit to be completed in 2004-05

1.24. Four surveys commissioned in 2003-04 are scheduled for completion/publication in 2004-05. These are the surveys on:

- Best Practice Guide on developing SEN statements and schools' delivery.
- Improving standards of provision for Welsh second-language.
- Effective learning strategies at Key Stage 2 and 3.
- Modern Foreign Languages in Welsh-medium schools.

Initial guidance on areas where advice will be required in 2005-06.

1.25. Estyn is remitted to put any necessary preparatory work in hand, in consultation with DfTE, during 2004-05 for work to be undertaken in 2005-06. It is anticipated that advice will be required on the following areas:

- Reducing the number of young people leaving school without qualifications.
- Review of action plans to address truancy and absenteeism.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of the early pilots of immersion education and intensive language teaching – as proposed in Iaith Pawb.
- Implementation of the Attendance Action Plan
- Standards of assessment at Key Stage 2.
- Effective learning at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 - the Aiming for Excellence Programme
- Implementation by schools of ACCAC guidance on Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig issued in Sept 2003.
- Standards in PE and School Sport – impact of the PE and School Sport Action Plan.
- Improving quality and standards in work based training and further education.
- A survey of best practice in collaboration between school sixth forms and FEIs to deliver flexible high quality provision that expands choice and achieves value for money.
- Community and company learning.
- Leadership and management in schools – capacity to manage change effectively.
- Governors' attention to standards in FE.
- Post-16 area review and learning networks.
- The impact of Induction and Early Professional Development on the quality of teaching and learning and on the retention of NQTs in teaching.

- The use of support staff in the classroom and their effectiveness in raising standards and reducing teachers' workloads.

FOOTNOTE

Guidance on commissioned advice.

Advice can take a number of forms including comments on proposals, provision of position papers and contributions to working groups. It may lead, in some instances, to the production of position papers. In most cases advice will draw on evidence already held by the Inspectorate and will be published on the Estyn website.

Survey work is based primarily on evidence drawn from surveys undertaken to address a specific topic or issue identified in the remit. In most cases this leads to the publication of good practice guides. Such guides are made widely available to relevant learning providers either in hard copy or through dissemination via the Internet.

Completion of advice and survey work.

To underpin the remit items identified as advice and survey work Estyn will be provided with supporting tables that set out:

- a short outline of the advice or survey work required;
- an initial view on the timescale for the completion of the work;
- confirmation that the advice or survey is for publication;
- a lead contact point in DfTE for each item of work commissioned in the remit.

This information is provided to underpin ongoing contact and discussion with the Inspectorate. It helps to ensure that the Inspectorate has a clear picture of the detail of the work required and of the target dates for its completion. The format is tailored to circumstances and requirements. It remains essential that:

- there should be a named contact within the Inspectorate for each item of remit work;
- DfTE and Estyn contact points should agree for each remit item the detail of what is to be provided by Estyn and milestones for completion for each remit item;
- milestones should allow opportunities to agree any changes required to the work in-year, scope for DfTE to be provided with early warning of emerging findings through access to draft reports and opportunities for DfTE to comment on matters of factual accuracy in draft reports and position papers.

Following submission of papers, reports and surveys to DfTE the material will, in most instances, be published by Estyn on the Estyn website and where agreed in hard copy. Summaries of reports and position papers may also be included in the Chief Inspector's Annual Report. Estyn will provide DfTE contacts with a schedule for submissions to DfTE in advance of publication. All submissions will be routed through the relevant Head of

Division to, as appropriate, the Director of DfTE or the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning.

Department for Training and Education
Welsh Assembly Government.

Summary of remit advice received from Estyn, December 2004 to May 2005

Title of Report	Date Published
<p>Welsh as a Second Language in Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3 and transition. The report evaluates aspects of good practice in teaching and learning and identifies factors that influence achievement and standards.</p>	December 2004
<p>Moving On... Effective learning at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3. Best practice guidance developed as part of the Aiming for Excellence Programme to support schools and LEAs in raising standards in Key Stage 3. The report has a specific focus on the contribution of effective transition</p>	December 2004
<p>Barriers to completion of full training frameworks by learners in work based learning. Advice on barriers to the completion of full training frameworks for learners in work-based learning provision. Focuses on learners on the foundation modern apprenticeship programme (FMA) and the modern apprenticeship programme (MA).</p>	December 2004
<p>Basic Skills Quality Mark award in primary and secondary schools in Wales. Advice on the role of the BSQM in helping primary and secondary schools in Wales to lever up the quality of provision and the standards achieved by pupils in literacy and numeracy.</p>	March 2005
<p>Thematic survey of pupil referral units and similar provision The report evaluates the provision made by local education authorities in pupil referral units (PRUs) and similar units for pupils who do not attend school full-time. It makes recommendations for improving provision used to inform the review of circular 3/99: Pupil Support and Social Inclusion.</p>	March 2005
<p>Post-16 provision in schools A review of the factors that influence the capacity of school sixth forms to meet the needs and aspirations of learners</p>	April 2005
<p>Low Performing Secondary Schools. A report on secondary schools which are not doing as well as they could be visited by Estyn between December 2003 and January 2005 with a summary of findings.</p>	April 2005
<p>Equal Opportunities. Survey assessing the impact of guidance issued by ACCAC in 2001 on the promotion of equal opportunities and diversity. The report also considers the effectiveness of measures taken by schools and LEAs in meeting statutory duties under race relations legislation.</p>	April 2005
<p>Sex and Relationships Education: The implementation by schools of the guidance in Circular 11/02. The report advises on the implementation of guidance issued to schools in 2002 on sex and relationships education. It makes a number of recommendations for action to develop and sustain the impact of the guidance.</p>	May 2005

<p>Mathcymru. Paper on progress of Mathcymru Initiative. The report reviews the progress made by Mathcymru in supporting schools and local authorities in promoting mathematics to young people as one element of the drive to raise standards of numeracy.</p>	May 2005
<p>Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig. Progress made by schools in the implementation of ACCAC's guidance issued in 2003. The report evaluates the progress made by schools in implementing the ACCAC guidance on Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig for early years to Key Stage 3.</p>	May 2005
<p>The impact of the PE and School Sport Initiative. Annual report on the impact of the PESS initiative. Report summarises findings from visits to 12 Development Centres and discussions with LEA PE advisers, head teachers, teachers and pupils.</p>	May 2005
<p>The quality of the education and training provided for Welsh young people in the youth justice system. Provides advice on the learning provided for young people under the supervision of YOTs. The report will inform the Young Offenders' Learning Project recently established by Welsh Assembly Government to improve the education and training provision available to all young people aged 11-25 in and from Wales who are known to YOTs or who are clients of the criminal justice system.</p>	May 2005
<p>Links between Continuing Professional Development, School Development Plans, performance management and raising standards – The report outlines the interrelationship between continuing professional development, school development plans, performance management and raising standards. It also explores how performance management and school development plans interlink to identify the development needs of both schools and individual teachers. It looks at how these needs are met and the impact this can have on raising standards.</p>	May 2005
<p>The induction year for newly qualified teachers in Wales: The report focuses on implementation of the induction year for all newly qualified teachers (NQTs) which became a statutory requirement in Wales in 2003. The requirement applies to teachers who gained qualified teacher status after 1 April 2003 and taking up their first teaching post on or after 1 September 2003.</p>	May 2005
<p>Success for all. Support in further education colleges and work based learning for 16-19 year olds with additional learning needs A follow up to previous remit work looking at transition planning from further education into training and employment. This latest survey report builds on the earlier work and focuses on learners with moderate learning difficulties between the ages of 16 and 19. It considers the quality of the support and information provided to learners so that they can learn alongside their peers and benefit fully from mainstream placements.</p>	May 2005

All reports are published on Estyn's website (www.estyn.gov.uk) or are due to be published shortly.