

DYSGU ac ADDYSGU CYMRU

ELW*a*

EDUCATION and LEARNING WALES

National Council

**Draft
Corporate Strategy**

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

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EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

Foreword

Enid Rowlands
Chairman – National Council – ELWa

In the four months since the National Council for Education and Training for Wales became responsible for all post-16 education and training (apart from higher education), we've talked to a wide range of people and organisations throughout Wales. We have been finding out what they believe needs to be done to produce the revolution in learning which will be necessary for Wales to be a successful modern nation. Key themes have come across loud and clear. They are:

- the importance of greater flexibility in the way learning is provided, enabling people and organisations to learn at home, in their communities and in the workplace in ways that suit them best;
- the need to encourage and recognise informal learning, particularly for the people taking the first steps on the learning ladder;
- the need for emphasis on the transferable skills of communication, numeracy, team working, problem solving and especially how to learn;
- the importance of much better progression opportunities at all levels, including into higher education, and of aligning the qualifications framework, quality assurance and funding to that end;
- the need for a distinctive agenda for Wales, including increased demand and improved opportunities for bilingual learning post-16;
- the importance of sustainable partnerships for success between all the planners and providers of learning, with the full involvement of individuals, communities and business;
- the importance of working coherently across the boundaries of pre and post-16 education; and
- the need to root all targets in the realities of what needs to be done to achieve them; so that our strategies and plans set out clearly the size and nature of each task, and the human and financial resources needed to meet and sustain achievement over the long run.

The success of the new arrangements for education and training provision in Wales will be realised only by genuine partnership working. This starts by sharing a vision for learning, respecting the work of others, building mutual trust, agreeing shared principles to guide decision making and a real willingness to change.

It's against this background that we now consult on the National Council's draft corporate strategy. Between now and mid November we will talk with individuals, communities, businesses and organisations throughout Wales to finalise the strategy. We will then use it as the framework for our first corporate plan, which will be submitted to the National Assembly in December.

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Working with the Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs) and others, we'll continue in the months and years ahead to maximise the returns from existing levels of investment in learning, working with businesses, communities and individuals to maximise their contributions of time and money to the learning revolution. If we believe, on the basis of our detailed work, that more public investment is needed, we will make the case to the National Assembly. Even so resources will be finite and we will not be able to meet need. There'll be a need for choices; a need for priorities.

Each chapter of the draft strategy ends with a series of questions on which we need your thoughts. They will help inform our view about priorities. What they come down to, is:

- Have we identified the key issues which will enable Wales to be a country of learning and therefore a successful nation?
- What are the priority areas for action?
- What balance should we strike between the various possible actions; for instance, should we prioritise at least in the short to medium term, to higher level skills essential to Wales' economic competitiveness over tackling the needs of the socially disadvantaged who lack essential skills? Or should the emphasis be the other way round?
- In particular, what should be the priority areas for public investment, and what balance should be struck between the contributions of the public purse and those of private businesses, the voluntary sector, communities and individuals?
- Are we sufficiently clear about the individual and collective contributions of the National Council – ELWa and other public bodies?

Your views count. To get your response, in the months ahead we'll be holding a wide range of events, building upon those which took place, to inform this draft and our continuing programme of market research. We would also welcome your written views on the questions we pose in this document and any other issues you want us to take into account. I urge you to get involved and keep working with us in leading the Learning Revolution which the National Council believes is the most important issue affecting Wales' future.



Enid Rowlands
July 2001

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The draft corporate strategy of the National Council – ELWa is presented in this document. We believe that economic and social success for businesses, communities and individuals in Wales will be achieved through learning. We set out a vision for learning and what success and failure would look like for you, and what needs to be done for Wales to be recognised internationally as a country of learning.
- 1.2 We identify strategic principles which we believe should guide all our actions towards the successful attainment of this vision.
- 1.3 Recognising that this vision cannot be achieved in isolation, we define the National Council's role and describe the five building blocks that form our draft strategy.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

Vision
 Making Learning Work for YOU
 Rhoi Dysgu ar Waith i CHI

Mission
 The National Council – ELWa's mission is world class learning for all; working in genuine partnerships to achieve measurable improvements in learning opportunities and achievements, which enable individuals, businesses and communities to fulfil their potential and contribute to a successful knowledge based economy, cultural wealth and an inclusive society.

Essential Skills
 To equip everyone over 16 with essential skills, to enable them to fulfil their potential in their personal lives, their work and their communities.

by:

- raising demand for essential skills;
- working with schools to develop links with young people under 16;
- influencing the provision of advice and guidance;
- creating learner centred choice and flexibility; and
- increasing the capacity; and capability of learning providers.

Lifelong Learning for Individuals
 To transform the supply of and demand for lifelong learning for all people over the age of 16 in Wales.

by:

- raising demand for lifelong learning;
- developing the supply base;
- developing a continuum of learning opportunities; and
- achieving learning excellence for all.

Knowledge Generation and Application
 To promote the transfer of existing knowledge and the generation of new knowledge and to translate this knowledge into the creation of wealth for Wales.

by:

- developing the knowledge base through quality and research;
- encouraging knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship;
- developing education and skills for the knowledge economy; and
- supporting ICT skills and infrastructure.

Skills for Business
 To provide the foundation for an internationally successful and sustainable knowledge-based economy, which is underpinned by major improvements in education and skill levels, entrepreneurial attitudes and management competence.

by:

- bridging the education to employment gap;
- stimulating demand for training;
- raising skill levels;
- developing the learning infrastructure;
- developing provision for voluntary sector SMEs;
- supporting a single gateway for business services; and
- monitoring and anticipating the skills needs of business.

Community Learning and Cultural Development
 To provide the basis for an inclusive, stable society and effective cultural development by transforming the lives of disadvantaged people and developing all our communities.

by:

- supporting community capacity building;
- mainstreaming community learning for all groups in society;
- recognising informal learning; and
- supporting cultural enhancement and development.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

2.0 All People, All Business, All Communities...Learning Works!

“We must ensure that everyone has the skills and the knowledge to fulfil their potential at all stages of their lives. It would be an unforgivable waste of talent and potential for us to do otherwise. We want Wales to be recognised as a Learning Country” BetterWales.com (1999)

- 2.1 Our strategy is being shaped through external consultation in which we are asking the businesses, communities and individual people of Wales to help us develop a joint vision for learning.
- 2.2 During the initial consultation there has been clear agreement that, in order to succeed in the new and rapidly evolving economy, to create strong communities and to enrich Wales’ cultural life, we need to develop a country committed to learning, where the capacity of businesses, communities, individuals and networks to acquire, adapt, communicate and apply knowledge is continuously improving.
- 2.3 Throughout the consultation there was a call for a simple vision for learning, that everyone involved in providing learning in Wales would strive for. We suggest the following statement reflects this shared vision and defines our collective role:

Making Learning Work for YOU

Rhoi Dysgu ar Waith i CHI

- 2.4 An all Wales belief that “Learning Works”, will achieve:
- a successful, sustainable economy which is both prosperous and inclusive;
 - the skills and knowledge to participate in a modern economy for all people;
 - individual well-being and fulfilment;
 - a spirit of enterprise, innovation, risk-taking and creativity;
 - bilingualism being regarded as an individual and economic advantage;
 - ability and determination to accept, embrace and drive change;
 - outward looking, forward thinking and positive attitudes;
 - generated and shared knowledge facilitating economic and community development; and
 - a commitment to lifelong learning for individuals, business and communities.

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2.5 *What does this mean for YOU?*

- **For businesses** it means ongoing training and investment in their workforce to support the continually changing products, processes and systems needed to become more competitive and effective. Our companies will work closely through local, regional, national and international networks sharing knowledge and understanding. They will regard people as their most valuable asset.
- **For communities** it means being vibrant, active and able to bring about change.
- **For individuals** it means being empowered to seek new opportunities, confident enough to learn new skills throughout their lives, seeking out and willing to embrace change at all opportunities.
- **For learning providers** it means flexibility in skills development, preparing people for lifelong learning, being responsive, taking learning to the learners and developing a capacity to transfer knowledge.
- **For the public sector** it means encouraging and rewarding risk-takers, ensuring consistent investment in people, raising national awareness of the need for learning, driving change, reducing bureaucracy, and itself being capable of learning.
- **For the voluntary sector** it means having the ability to work with those who are hardest to reach, investing in its own workforce and developing its own capacity to learn.

We cannot afford to fail.

What Would Failure Look Like?

- Continuing dependence on unskilled employment in low value-added businesses.
- Stagnant labour market.
- Businesses stuck in a low skills, low growth trap.
- Continued skills mismatch.
- Ignored by international investors.
- No confidence to innovate and be entrepreneurial.
- Widening income inequalities across Wales.
- Increasing number of disadvantaged communities.
- Breakdown of social cohesion.
- Out-migration threatening the economic vitality of Wales, the Welsh language and culture.

2.6 **The Future of Learning**

“We must have the imagination to move the whole of Wales to believe – to believe passionately and instinctively, as a habit of thinking and a way of life – that it is possible for lifelong learning for all to be a reality; to have the self confidence to be successful at the highest level; to believe, above all, that even our most disadvantaged fellow citizens and communities should and can share fully in that success – because unless that happens we won’t have been successful”.

– ELWa Debate – June 2001

- 2.7 The dynamics of the new economy will drive the need for new types of education, training and learning institutions that prepare people for a constantly changing world.

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2.8 From our research and consultation we believe that the following will be key features of the future learning industry:

- Active learners enabled teachers as facilitators.
- Responsiveness to the different needs and learning styles of people and businesses.
- Promoting and developing active citizenship.
- Relationships which encourage imagination, innovation and originality.
- Community centred – in convenient flexible, locations.
- Offering excellent information and advice.
- Characterised by learning organisations, consistently striving to drive up standards, anticipating and encouraging change rather than simply reacting to it.
- Building knowledge capacity and exploiting it within Wales.
- Lifewide – learning for personal, economic and social benefits, as well as lifelong learning, will be regarded as essential.

We believe that success will only be achieved through:

2.9 ***Adopting shared strategic principles***

Our consultation identified strategic principles for learning which should guide all our actions towards the attainment of a shared vision. Learning should:

- Be learner-focused.
- Be flexible and responsive to individual need.
- Offer a spectrum of learning opportunities.
- Be accessible to all.
- Shape our knowledge and experiences.
- Encourage us to understand and manage risk.
- Inspire innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship.
- Be responsive to social and economic need.
- Provide sustainable benefits.
- Enable us to understand our diverse cultures and communities and contribute to their development.
- Be benchmarked against world-class standards.

2.10 ***Working in partnership***

“The new Council’s partnerships are vital to the success of the new education and training arrangements. It means forging closer links with key stakeholders at national, regional and local levels. “

– Jane Davidson AM – Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning– ELWa Debate, February 2001

The National Council’s contribution is vital to Wales’ future success, but it is not sufficient on its own.

We believe that success depends upon a joint commitment to this vision and strategic principles, a willingness to change, mutual trust and respect for others’ contributions. Wales needs partnerships that share vision, thinking and action and which will challenge traditional approaches to people development. Successful partnership working is not always easy to realise

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but we believe it is crucial. We will work wholeheartedly to achieve joined-up thinking and implementation.

In identifying a few key partners this means:

- *Businesses* – acceptance that people are the key business asset and it is investment in people that will be decisive in the future.
- *Learning Providers* – a commitment to ensure that all learning provision is world class and to adopt new teaching styles to inspire learners.
- *Schools* – ensuring that all young people leave school equipped with essential skills, the motivation, desire and tools to continue learning throughout their lives.
- *Local Authorities* – ensuring that learning becomes a key element in their own strategies and the active promotion of learning to all their individuals, businesses and communities.
- *Careers Wales* – ensuring that everyone has access to relevant information about future opportunities.
- *Welsh Development Agency* – working in partnership with us to develop competitive businesses through investments in people and communities.
- *The National Assembly for Wales* – actively developing, promoting and resourcing learning within Wales.

Consultation Questions

Will you sign up to this shared vision for “Making Learning Work for YOU”?

Will you adopt the strategic principles?

What actions do we need to take jointly and independently to achieve this vision?

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3.0 The Role of the National Council – ELWa

- 3.1 The National Council - ELWa's contribution to achieving this vision is to support the creation of a dynamic world-class learning infrastructure, offering the relevant education and skills needed by individuals, communities and business. We have an equally important role in developing and promoting the learning culture in Wales and as a strategic funding body providing leadership for post 16 education and learning.
- 3.2 We are responsible for the effective deployment and evaluation of National Assembly funds for post 16 education and learning (excluding higher education) and have received indicative investment levels.
- 3.3 There will, of course, be competing priorities for funding during the period of this strategy. However, our aim is to invest in that which equips people right across Wales with the relevant education and skills to enable them to participate fully at home, work and in their communities. We must respond to the needs of businesses, communities and individuals by complementing, not duplicating, private and voluntary sector provision.
- 3.4 Our role is best defined as follows:

The National Council – ELWa's mission is world class learning for all; working in genuine partnerships to achieve measurable improvements in learning opportunities and achievements, which enable individuals, businesses and communities to fulfil their potential and contribute to a successful knowledge based economy, cultural wealth and an inclusive society.

- 3.5 We have identified five building blocks; essential skills, lifelong learning for individuals; knowledge generation and application, skills for businesses and community learning and cultural development. All are ultimately inter-dependent and we must succeed in each one if we are to achieve our mission and to ensure our optimum contribution to make learning work for you.
- 3.6 We believe that our four cross cutting themes of sustainability, equal opportunities, bilingualism and social inclusion are key to all our activities and will ensure that they play an integral part in all our strategies.

Consultation Questions

Have we identified the distinctive role of the National Council correctly?

Do you agree with the building blocks of our strategy?

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4.0 Essential Skills

"I'd like to learn and read and write properly and write letters ... I want to do it for myself ... I want to start doing things for myself"

"I'd like to learn computer skills to keep up with the children "

ELWa Debate – Market Research, June 2001

4.1 **What are Essential Skills?**

We are defining essential skills as:

Skill needs that we all have, regardless of personal, social or economic circumstances.

4.2 This definition will help our strategic focus through:

- bringing together the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, key skills, generic skills and social skills;
- enabling an overarching strategic focus while recognising the distinct issues with each skill agenda; and
- enabling us to look ahead and incorporate within our longer term strategy the 'new basic skills' (as defined by the European Commission) for the 21st century - IT skills, foreign language, technological culture, entrepreneurship, and social skills.

4.3 **Why are they Important?**

We firmly believe that these skills are essential for employment, community activity, active citizenship and to generate a sense of direction and personal well-being. They are also vital to the ability to learn in its own right.

4.4 **Basic Skills**

We need to address the deficits in literacy and numeracy that are stopping many people reaching even the first base of the opportunities provided by the new economy. People lacking basic skills in the poorest communities in Wales will become even more vulnerable as low-wage, low-skill jobs in these areas face increasing competition from lower-cost economies overseas.

We need to develop a number of different approaches to improve basic skills deficiencies ranging from in-depth one to one support to linking learning with other activities relevant to people's lives and circumstances.

4.5 **Generic Skills**

The Future Skills Wales survey identified the single biggest barrier to individual and business development as the lack of generic transferable skills in people at all levels of educational competence.

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Skills Set	% stating “very important”	% stating increasing importance in future
Communications skills	88	41
Understanding customer needs	88	45
Ability to earn	81	41
Team working skills	81	38
Showing initiative	80	38
Ability to follow instructions	79	32
Literacy	76	34
Numeracy	71	32
Product knowledge	71	39
Problem solving skills	66	34
Organising own learning and development	58	38
Job specific skills	57	31
Management skills	50	33
Leadership skills	45	27
Basic IT skills	39	47
Formal qualifications	24	27
Advanced IT skills	16	29
Welsh language skills	11	19
Foreign language skills	4	16

FSW - 1998

4.6 **Social Skills**

Social skills, such as self-confidence, the ability to take initiative, communicate effectively and work in teams are even more important today than ever before as people are now being expected to take control of their future.

- 4.7 There can be no doubt that for many individuals developing essential skills is a basic precondition of being able to participate in the modern economy. Essential skills themselves and the self-confidence that comes with them are essential to developing the social capital that underpins successful, sustainable, vibrant communities and businesses.

4.8 **What is our Strategy?**

To equip everyone over 16 with essential skills, to enable them to fulfil their potential in their personal lives, their work and their communities.

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The key elements of our strategy are to:

- raise demand for essential skills;
- to work with schools to develop links with young people under 16;
- influence the provision of advice and guidance;
- create learner centred choice and flexibility; and
- increase the capacity and capability of learning providers.

4.9 **Raise Demand for Essential Skills**

It is clear that giving young people and adults the motivation to improve their essential skills will be a major challenge for us. Past campaigns have only achieved limited success.

Experience¹ shows that key episodes in a person's life play an important part in motivating them to improve basic skills. These include a new job, a new baby, a child starting school or a chance of promotion; just as important is the desire to feel better, more confident and to fit in. Our strategy will capitalise on those opportunities while overcoming the barriers.

Barriers to improving skills include:

- lack of personal motivation;
- fear of failure;
- stigma attached to admitting to having poor skills;
- lack of awareness of available options;
- perceived cost;
- learning or physical disability;
- childcare and family commitments; and
- feeling that it is too late.

4.10 Our strategy could:

- highlight the overall concept of essential skills, which is aspirational, rather than the specific concept of basic skills which sounds negative and remedial;
- promote the importance of essential skills and the benefits to individuals of improving these;
- motivate people to take action;
- signpost people to the key support structure, very often community and mentor based; and
- build upon the good practice already in existence.

¹ The Basic Skills Agency

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**4.11 Working With Schools to Develop Links with Young People Under 16**

A consistent and strong message throughout our consultation has been that primary and secondary education plays a vital role in reducing the number of people with poor basic skills in later adult life and it is vital that we consider how to support them in this role.

We need to ensure that children at risk of under attainment do not miss opportunities to succeed at post-16 level, and that they have the advice, and support they need to access innovative and high quality learning opportunities.

This could involve:

- continued commitment to family literacy and numeracy programmes;
- support for school-related programmes;
- encouraging learning providers to develop an alternative curriculum for those excluded or at risk of exclusion from school; and
- the provision of information about current and future skills needs.

4.12 Advice and Guidance

We will work closely with others, in particular Learndirect, Careers Wales, local authorities, CCETs, learning providers, Employment Service, Disability Wales, the Basic Skills Agency and the voluntary sector to ensure that all adults have access to independent, impartial and confidential advice and guidance. Effective advice and guidance should inspire and motivate individuals to improve their essential skills.

This could involve:

- working together to provide the advice and guidance support structure required, ensuring that potential learners are not confused or put off by the many and varied initiatives available; and
- developing effective individual assessment techniques.

4.13 Create Learner Centred Choice and Flexibility

Our challenge is to empower potential learners through learner-centred options.

Range of Learning Opportunities

- In the workplace
- At home
- Applicable to personal circumstances
- Family initiatives
- Community based learning
- With voluntary groups
- Independent learning
- At a college or school
- Through modern and traditional technologies

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This could be achieved through:

- developing a shared understanding of the needs of the different learners through research and evaluation;
- working with learning providers to develop a range of learning opportunities which are in line with the needs of the learners and relate to the different contexts in which they need to use these skills;
- embedding the development of essential skills as an integral part of all learning opportunities;
- actively supporting community and voluntary organisations in their vital role of developing essential skills through informal learning and mentoring;
- encouraging as many people as possible to help themselves through supported independent learning;
- reduced bureaucracy and paperwork for learners and increased flexibility; and
- building upon best practice in Wales and internationally to develop new, fresh and exciting approaches.

4.14 **Increasing the Capacity and Capability of Learner Providers**

Wales requires inspirational and expert mentors and teachers to deliver our essential skills strategy. Their role will be vital in enthusing adults and in overcoming negative experiences of learning, poor motivation, and lack of confidence.

This could be achieved through:

- supporting the intensive training of providers;
- supporting capacity building within the voluntary and community sectors;
- working with businesses, trade unions and others in the workplace to develop workplace learning opportunities; and
- developing new approaches which suit small and medium sized organisations.

Consultation Questions

What can you add to our analysis?

Do you agree with our definition of essential skills?

Do you agree with the key elements of our strategy?

What actions do we need to take jointly and independently to achieve our strategy?

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5.0 Lifelong Learning for Individuals

Lifelong learning is no longer just one aspect of education and training; it must become the guiding principle for provision and participation across the full continuum of learning contexts

– Memorandum on Lifelong Learning – European Commission - 2001

5.1 What is Lifelong Learning?

The European Commission has defined lifelong learning as:

“All purposeful learning activity, undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence”.

5.2 Why is it Important?

A firm foundation in essential skills is crucial for everyone, but represents only the start of a process of learning throughout life. The economies of today and tomorrow will demand ever-changing skills, qualifications and experience.

The knowledge, understanding and skills we learn at home, at school, during training and whilst at university or college will not sustain us throughout our lifetime. Through positive promotion we need to encourage everyone in Wales to constantly review their skills and abilities. We also need to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in learning.

The Future Skills Wales research invited individuals to say which barriers prevented them from undertaking any formal education or learning:

	Residents - %
None – nothing preventing me	26
Family/childcare commitments	22
Not enough time	22
Can't afford it	17
Work pressures	14
No suitable/interesting courses	12
Feel too old	11
Lack of transport	7
Lack of information	7
Lack of confidence	6
Haven't got round to it	6
Too far to travel	5

FSW - 1998

Encouraging adults to continue learning, or to return to learning, requires a flexible and imaginative approach. It must take into account their lifestyle, time available, and aspirations.

Personal circumstances including personal health problems, disability, special needs or family illness are particular areas where we need to ensure that we make a special effort in developing the appropriate learning opportunity. We need to ensure that learning providers are sensitive to individual circumstances and respond accordingly.

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Individual motivation to learn and the variety of learning opportunities available are key factors in implementing lifelong learning effectively.

5.3 What is our Strategy?

To transform the supply of and demand for lifelong learning for all people over the age of 16 in Wales.

The key elements of our strategy are to:

- raise demand for lifelong learning;
- develop the supply base;
- develop a continuum of learning opportunities; and
- achieve learning excellence for all.

5.4 Raise Demand for Lifelong Learning

The creation of a sustainable culture of lifelong learning is crucial for people's personal development and the future strength of the Welsh economy. For many this requires a change in attitude to learning, personal aspirations and motivation.

This will require increased participation in learning, providing adults with new opportunities to learn, and increasing the numbers gaining new and improved skills. We will work with partners to overcome barriers to learning, such as distance, lack of affordable childcare and negative perceptions about learning.

During the ELWa Debates it was suggested that the following activities could help raise demand:

- positive promotion of the benefits of learning;
- continued support for Individual Learning Accounts;
- encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own personal development;
- encourage employers to promote and support lifelong learning;
- identify leading-edge practices and case studies of highly successful learners, at all levels, to stimulate demand;
- capitalise on changing circumstances to develop interest in new skills (e.g. a large number of UFI learners are aged over 50 and were prompted to start learning ICT skills to in order to send e-mails to their grandchildren);
- work with Careers Wales to reach out to people rather than waiting for them to come looking for information on learning;
- take positive action along with providers to prevent early leavers; and
- minimise bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork for learners.

5.5 Develop the Supply Base

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With our partners, we have a critical role to play in ensuring that our learning systems adapt to the changing ways people live, learn and work today.

We need to ensure that all partners work closely together to:

- develop a learner-centred network of lifelong learning opportunities for all aged over 16;
- eliminate unnecessary duplication in local plans through strategic partnerships;
- encourage and support innovation in teaching and learning;
- encourage learning providers to bring learning closer to the learner through:
 - effective use of e-learning and digital television;
 - developing learning centres in everyday locations including community and village halls, supermarkets, health centres, and train stations; and
 - developing learning opportunities in line with people's life and learning styles – early in the day, late at night, weekends and during holidays.
- ensure that our learning providers are equipped with the most up to date facilities; and
- support learning institutions and their staff in the future as we move towards active learning and as teachers become facilitators, mentors and guides.

5.6 **A Continuum of Learning Opportunities**

It will be important to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to continue their learning throughout life at a time and pace most suited to their needs and ability.

Activities to achieve this could include:

- working with Careers Wales and others to ensure that all young people are aware of the opportunities open to them at age 16 and all adults have up to date information on learning opportunities;
- developing and implementing an effective credit based and transfer framework. This needs to allow individuals to gain recognition from a broad range of learning opportunities - mixing both academic and vocational subjects if required – and to obtain formal credit for all knowledge and skills acquired. This “portable CV of skills” can only be achieved through close partnerships with the awarding bodies; and
- encouraging learning providers to develop more user friendly courses with short snappy bite sized quality chunks of learning to fit in with people's lifestyles.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**5.7 Achieve Learning Excellence for All**

Evidence indicates that poor experiences of learning in the past will prevent people from undertaking further learning activity. We must ensure that everyone has a world-class learning experience that will motivate them to continue learning.

This could be achieved through:

- ensuring that the learning objectives are agreed before the learning starts;
- the development of a national framework with local flexibility;
- encouraging a culture of continuous improvement within all providers; and
- sharing models of good practice.

Consultation Questions

What can you add to our analysis?

Do you agree with our definition of lifelong learning?

Do you agree with the key elements of our strategy?

What actions do we need to take jointly and independently to achieve our strategy?

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6.0 Knowledge Generation and Application

If we are to prosper in these times we must learn not only to adapt rapidly to change but to capitalise on possibilities through the creation of new bodies of knowledge and wisdom – Learning in this profound sense is the core concept of our time”

Learning and Skills Development Agency – Prof Charles Desforges – University of Exeter

6.1 Why is Knowledge Generation and Application Important?

Success in accessing and using knowledge is central to the promotion of growth. If Wales is to prosper in these times of accelerating change we must learn not only to adapt but to utilise knowledge. It was suggested during our consultation that this is best achieved through the creation of new areas of knowledge, as well as the release of existing knowledge from further and higher education institutions and others to the businesses and communities in Wales. At the same time, the exploitation of employees' knowledge is seen increasingly by businesses as their greatest competitive advantage. The ability of management and staff to gather information, generate new knowledge, search out best practice and apply this knowledge to business improvement and innovation is crucial. ICT skills were highlighted as a specific requirement of the emerging knowledge based economy.

“Existing 'old' knowledge is as important as wholly original knowledge if it can help increase innovation, competitiveness and productivity. Relevance, not novelty is the issue”.

Prof Sir Adrian Webb – University of Glamorgan

6.2 How Well does Wales do this?

In both higher and further education, the ability to transfer knowledge is patchy and inconsistent. The number of business spinouts from our institutions, graduates, research and teaching staff is not high enough. There is also relatively weak demand from firms within Wales for the services of universities and colleges.

The ready availability of well-qualified engineers, technicians and future managers emerging from Wales post 16-education system should assist growth. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a loss of this talent from Wales and some difficulties in attracting it back.

Lack of technical, organisational and administrative competences are all factors limiting the ability of firms in Wales to make use of new technologies, which in turn is having a negative impact upon productivity and growth.

Innovation

The ability to turn innovations into profitable business activity, raises productivity and helps improve long-term wage levels. Encouragingly, a growing number of Welsh companies are recognising the importance of innovation.

Throughout our consultations it was agreed that we need to develop a holistic approach to the issues of knowledge development and transfer, attitudes, education and skills for a knowledge based economy.

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6.3 What is our Strategy?

To promote the transfer of existing knowledge and the generation of new knowledge and to translate this knowledge into the creation of wealth for Wales.

The key elements of our strategy are to:

- develop the knowledge base;
- encourage knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship;
- develop education and skills for the knowledge economy; and
- support ICT skills and infrastructure.

6.4 Developing the Knowledge Base Through High Quality Research

This could include:

- undertaking joint research work with our partners to identify the market sectors and business clusters on which to concentrate our efforts to enable us to develop the economy and the necessary skills;
- encouraging collaboration between HE and FE institutions to win major research and knowledge exploitation funds. This would be in line with a coherent national strategy for basic and applied research, knowledge transfer and business support;
- encouraging institutions to work together to develop networks with a reputation for innovation and excellence; and
- supporting the creation of additional capacity to explore future trends in the economy. The aim is to analyse and understand in a holistic way the social and economic factors that need to be considered in shaping public sector investment in the longer term.

6.5 Knowledge Transfer and Entrepreneurship

“Spending on basic research is simply a subsidy to other nations’ innovation processes (via publications in international journals) unless spent on development work and the utilisation of knowledge is also given at least a high priority”.

Prof Sir Adrian Webb – University of Glamorgan

We could do this through:

- working with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Welsh Development Agency to develop a more integrated approach to investing in innovation and exploiting intellectual property by linking higher education institutions and colleges, research institutes and innovating firms;
- ensuring that, where appropriate, learning providers will have effective policies and mechanisms to aid the transfer and exploitation of technology;
- developing innovation in teaching methods and building a dedicated pool of teachers, capable of teaching enterprise;
- examining how we can develop the spirit of enterprise through entrepreneurial role models; and
- supporting the implementation of the ‘Knowledge Exploitation Fund’.

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Entrepreneurship

Wales is 18th out of the 26 member-nations of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. In terms of entrepreneurial activity, only 2.6% of the Welsh working-age population are involved in emerging or new firms. However, there is encouraging evidence that potential entrepreneurs in Wales are not afraid of failure.

6.6 **Education and Skills for the Knowledge Economy**

We need to ensure that the people of Wales have the education, skills and ability to compete. We could do this through:

- using Future Skills Wales to keep track of emerging knowledge and skills requirements to advise learning providers;
- ensuring the development of business skills essential for Wales to be competitive in the global knowledge economy;
- the development of higher level technical skills;
- supporting the development of the 'in house' capability of firms to exploit advanced technology; and
- conducting research into less traditional training approaches, which develop the competencies for 'knowledge workers'.

6.7 **ICT Skills and Infrastructure**

Cymru Arlein, the National Assembly's strategy for the e.economy, has identified a significant deficit in ICT skills in Wales.

We recognise progress is being made in establishing an e-learning culture but much remains to be done. Crucially we are not yet able to say that ICT is embedded in our daily lives and our culture. This needs to be tackled urgently if we are to avoid being left on the wrong side of a future digital divide.

This could include:

- examining how we can further promote the development of ICT skills at all levels amongst all our learning providers;
- implementing the results of an in depth study into ICT skill needs (to be completed by early 2002); and
- understanding, promoting and supporting the effective use of e-learning as part of an overall learning strategy.

Consultation Questions

What can you add to our analysis?

Do you agree with the key elements of our strategy?

What actions do we need to take jointly and independently to achieve our strategy?

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7.0 Skills for Business

We need to start building the economy of the future based on skills and talent and education and the application of technology. We know that for the country, in the future, the focus of global competition and technological change means that we can only compete on the basis of skill and ability, not low wages ”

Tony Blair, Prime Minister – June 2001

7.1 Why is it Important?

Welsh businesses and organisations increasingly have to compete in fast changing and international markets. For companies to grow and prosper in this environment, it is vital that both the current and future workforce have the necessary education, skills and motivation.

Large companies, Welsh and international, play an important role in our economy, they are major employers and have particular requirements, in terms of skills and future training. They are also critical for supporting smaller companies through supply chains and business to business networks. It is essential to ensure that we are able to supply the right skills to larger companies enabling them to compete and that we are able to support them in their future learning requirements.

The public sector employs over 30% of the Welsh workforce and requires the appropriate skills and learning opportunities. We need to develop the skills of all those employed in the public sector and support this sector in developing an entrepreneurial and “can do” culture.

During the ELWa Debates it became clear that many small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) have little time or resources to train in the formal sense and are frequently disappointed by the learning service offered.

Although SMEs are often criticised for their lack of training, current research² indicates that we underestimate the real extent of learning within SMEs due to our tendency to measure only formal learning. Indeed informal learning may often be more appropriate to the needs of SMEs and their employees. Our challenge is not just how to drive demand for more formal training, but to make informal learning more effective.

International inward investment will continue to be significant to Wales’ economic growth. One of the critical attractions for investors will be the availability of skilled labour, combined with a supportive education and training infrastructure, which can provide tailor-made assistance.

² The Marchmont Observatory

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7.2 Current and Future Trends Concerning Skills Needs

- Key employment sectors are predicted to be financial and business services, communications, electrical and optical equipment, printing and publishing, and tourism.
- Basic IT skills will become more important.
- Soft skills (communication, team working and the ability to learn) will also become more important, as will business-focused skills (understanding customer needs and product knowledge).

Many employers are experiencing hard-to fill vacancies, partly due to skills shortages, as well as gaps between workers' skills and the skills their organisations need. There are simply too many people in Wales with no or low level qualifications and, more importantly, too few people with intermediate and higher level skills. These shortages and gaps inhibit innovation, hinder investment, constrain business development and unless resolved will force Wales into a low skills trap.

Recent research into sectors in Wales identified these vocational issues in the sectors researched:

- more emphasis needed on higher level entry skills (Level 2) and subsequent development;
- need to strengthen the entrepreneurial approach, plus the commercial and technical skills of new entrants;
- shortage of experienced engineers and technicians and employees with specialist skills, for example, software process skills; and
- management and leadership skills need to be improved.

The challenge for us is to develop the skills, know-how and capacity of businesses and individuals to be responsive. It requires a new way of thinking from businesses and individuals to commit to a continual updating of skills and knowledge throughout life. Similarly, new approaches are required from us and our partner organisations to develop effective education and training policies and systems in order to respond effectively to these needs.

7.3 What is our Strategy?

To provide the foundation for an internationally successful and sustainable knowledge-based economy, which is underpinned by a major positive change in education and skill levels, entrepreneurial attitudes and management competence.

The key elements of our strategy are to:

- bridge the education to employment gap;
- stimulate demand for training;
- raise skill levels;
- develop the learning infrastructure;
- develop provision for voluntary sector SMEs;
- support a single gateway for business services; and
- monitor and anticipate the skills needs of business.

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7.4 Bridging the Gap – Education to Employment

“There is a major gap between what education provides and what industry needs”

ELWa Debate, June 2001

Learning experiences need to prepare people for the world of work.

This could be achieved through:

- developing links to those still at school, those leaving with low skills find it hard to make up for lack of early success in later life;
- encouraging employers and educational institutions to work together through work placements for teachers and lecturers; and
- working with Careers Wales and employers to maximise the quality and relevance of work experiences for young people.

7.5 Stimulate Demand for Training

“Tomorrow’s society will be determined by the learning we deliver today”

Michael Frye CBE, 2001

- ***Through promotion***

Understanding and valuing the potential benefits of learning is a key driver for developing learning. We need to demonstrate to business that the costs of learning will be recouped through operational cost savings, greater efficiency, improved processes and increased profits.

- Firms providing both internal and external training are significantly more likely to survive than non-trainers.
- For most size firms, all types of trainers have a higher survival probability than non-trainers.
- Training improves the survival probability at all levels of profit margin.³

- ***Through empowerment and engagement***

We need to engage employers in new ways, identify mechanisms that will help workforce planning, make recruitment and retention easier, empower employees and employers to undertake learning and training, and provide support to develop and implement learning strategies.

We will consider how best we could incentivise business to invest in learning; this could be achieved through the development of a Company Learning Account, where we will match fund training and mentoring in line with the company’s objectives and business plan. This approach will allow us to streamline the types of support we offer businesses into an integrated package applicable to their needs. Recognising that not all businesses will require the same level of support, consideration will be given to developing different levels of support dependent upon the company’s requirements, growth potential and sector.

³ Investment In Training and Small Firm Growth and Survival: An Empirical Analysis for the UK 1987 1995. - Andy Cosh, John Duncan and Alan Hughes, University of Cambridge. - January 1998.

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- ***Through developing and supporting learning networks***

“Firms learn best from other firms – those that have walked the talk”

Prof. Kevin Morgan – ELWa Debate – June 2001

We regard the creation of inter-company networks as an extremely powerful way of supporting business in its training needs. We will help businesses to share best practice and work together more effectively through collaborative networks and peer mentoring.

7.6 **Raising Skill Levels**

The Wales Skills Task Force placed strong emphasis upon raising the skills of those already in employment.

“Our deliberations have led us to conclude that the greatest return for the economy of Wales would come from getting more of our workforce qualified at level 3.”

We believe that skill levels could be raised by:

- developing programmes to deliver work-ready skills, building upon our essential skills activity;
- encouraging partner organisations at national and local levels to sign up to a commitment to raise skill levels in the area; and
- working with the Wales Management Council to support the development of management skills.

7.7 **Developing the Learning Infrastructure**

Our products and services are currently not structured in ways to best meet the needs of the business sector; these needs are often just-in-time knowledge and bite sized quality chunks of learning, rather than inflexible, prescribed outcomes. We need to offer flexible and customer-focused training in line with the goal of creating highly skilled businesses.

This could involve:

- understanding the learning needs of businesses and the economy through research and evaluation;
- supporting the creation of a customer-focused system;
- ensuring that providers seeking to meet learning needs of businesses will have a clear picture of the needs of the market;
- supporting providers to make learning readily accessible;
- reducing bureaucracy for businesses; and
- creating an equitable funding regime.

7.8 **Provision for Voluntary Sector SMEs**

Voluntary organisations, including community businesses, operate as SMEs in buying and delivering services in their communities. They constitute a significant market for education and training. They share many of their

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education and training needs with small businesses but have particular needs in the design and delivery of education and training provision.

We believe that a strategy for support to voluntary sector SMEs could involve:

- understanding the learning needs of voluntary sector SMEs through research and evaluation;
- assisting voluntary sector SMEs in workforce planning and developing workforce learning strategies;
- promoting learning opportunities for voluntary sector employees and volunteers; and
- developing the ability of voluntary sector providers to meet the learning needs of the sector.

7.9 **A Single Gateway for Business Services**

We are committed to developing Business Connect as the single gateway for companies wishing to access publicly funded support. We will build upon the work that has already started with the WDA to:

- ensure simple direct access to learning and skills development;
- integrate client management;
- raise quality standards; and
- encourage Careers Wales, NTOs, further education, private and voluntary training providers to synchronise their activities in giving guidance, funding and provision within this gateway.

7.10 **Monitoring and Anticipating the Skills Needs of Business**

Understanding current skill needs, anticipating skills requirements, and responding to changes in the labour market are essential for successful investment in provision. Building on Future Skills Wales, we have a unique opportunity to develop a skills intelligence and foresight capability which in itself will be a source of competitive advantage.

We could:

- work with key partners to establish a skills foresight capability.

Consultation Questions

What can you add to our analysis?

Do you agree with the key elements of our strategy?

What actions do we need to take jointly and independently to achieve our strategy?

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8.0 Community Learning and Cultural Development

... Learning contributes to social cohesion and fosters a sense of belonging, responsibility and identity. In communities affected by rapid economic change and industrial restructuring, learning builds local capacity to respond to this change”

David Blunkett – The Learning Age – 1998

8.1 What is Community Learning?

We are defining a **community** as:

Voluntary networks, based upon trust and respect, with shared norms, values and understanding that facilitate co-operation towards a common goal for their mutual benefit

And **community learning** as:

- Learning that is designed to regenerate a community through developing the education and skills of its people.
- Learning that strengthens the networks of the community.

This can occur in many forms:

Learning in the community – supports the view that learning should be accessible in the local community – a library, community or village hall.

Learning for the community – this supports community capacity building through activities designed to help social capital as well as individual competencies.

Learning through the community – the type of learning characterised by the learner's voluntary participation in community activity.

8.2 Why is it important?

“We start from a position where too many, far too many, of our people fail to achieve their full potential in society. There are many that become marginalised from mainstream society altogether.”

Huw Lewis AM– ELWa Debate – January 2001

A particularly strong message throughout our consultation was that locally led community groups are critical in helping to engage people in learning. Community and voluntary groups undertake very effective work with disadvantaged people. This is usually because they have a clear understanding of local needs, are more credible and operate more flexibly, tailoring their provision to learners needs.

Working through communities and their organisations, we need to work with our partners to find ways to reach isolated lone parents, all those currently inactive, disaffected young men, those with third or fourth generation experiences of unemployment and those whose aspirations are cramped and starved by experience and circumstance. Securing the participation of underrepresented groups will contribute and sustain our vision.

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8.3 Informal Learning

“We need an educated workforce, and an active participative democracy. But will we achieve that by focusing exclusively on supporting individuals to gain a lengthening list of individual skills required?” – Alan Tuckett – Niace - 2001

A large amount of the learning that takes place in a community environment can be defined as “informal learning” - learning that is not linked to any formal qualification.

Very often informal learning is the first step back into education and learning for many people (indeed they are often not aware that this is happening) and plays a major role in developing essential skills including self confidence, motivation and basic literacy and numeracy skills. Many of these people would not participate in formal learning or study for a formal qualification because of the perceived bureaucracy. The challenge is to develop a strategy which recognises the benefits of informal learning while enabling the learner to develop a range of skills. The learning objectives will need to be negotiated with learners themselves who will need to reflect on their own learning and progress.

8.4 Cultural Opportunities

Developing cultural opportunities within communities can improve the quality of life for individuals, develop sustainable communities, promote social cohesion and engender active citizenship. These goals were identified during our consultation as being essential components of a learning country.

Cultural activities can:

- increase individual self esteem;
- give people who are excluded much needed skills and confidence;
- bring together people of all ages and parts of society;
- develop enterprising social and creative industries; and
- encourage and enrich cultural tourism

8.5 What is our Strategy?

To provide the basis for an inclusive, stable society and effective cultural development by transforming the lives of disadvantaged people and developing all our communities.

The key elements of our strategy are to:

- support community capacity building;
- mainstream community learning for all groups in society;
- recognise informal learning; and
- support cultural enhancement and development.

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8.6 **Community Capacity Building**

“Community development starts where the people are at – with the issues that matter to them.” – Alice Greenlees - WCVA

Working in partnerships with communities we will develop learning solutions that meet their needs.

This could involve:

- supporting and training community mentors: individuals who are trusted and respected in the community to develop their capacity to help individuals and communities to work together to gain learning opportunities;
- identifying leading edge practices to empower community action;
- capacity building within the sector;
- developing accessible local provision; and
- promoting the value of volunteering.

8.7 **Mainstream Community Learning for all Groups in Society**

Research indicates that if we are to develop effective and sustainable communities we need to support them through the simplification and mainstreaming of programmes, recognising all contributions to community learning, and building links to formal learning.

Our approach to this could include:

- reducing bureaucracy for the provider as well as the learner;
- developing a credit and transfer framework which recognises community learning; and
- developing Community Learning Accounts.

8.8 **Recognising Informal Learning**

Informal learning is a powerful tool to widen participation in learning and we need to develop an effective strategy to recognise and encourage this. Our consultation has indicated that the following areas could be a key part of our strategy:

- measure and reward distance travelled through personal development and self-assessment against original learning objectives;
- encourage and support “bite sized chunks” of learning;
- recognise that informal learning is time and cost intensive; and
- support programmes that are learner focused and offer individual choice.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**8.9 Cultural Enhancement and Development**

The development of our cultural strategy could include:

- working with key partners to develop key cultural sectors;
- developing the skills and expertise required for the cultural sectors; and
- continued promotion and support for cultural activities in Wales.

Consultation Questions

What can you add to our analysis?

Do you agree with our definitions of communities and community learning?

Do you agree with the key elements of our strategy?

What actions do we need to take jointly and independently to achieve our strategy?

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9.0 Implementation

9.1 The message throughout our consultations was that the creation of the National Council - ELWa must not be allowed to be a simple reorganisation of existing remits and programmes. There was consensus that a sea change is needed in learning policy and provision in Wales, but that we also need to build upon the many excellent activities of the present.

9.2 We are conscious of the huge expectations placed upon us by the National Assembly to bring rapid improvements to the volume and quality of learning throughout Wales, including the particular expectation that we should accelerate progress rapidly from 2002 onwards, the period which will be covered by our first corporate plan.

9.3 Our Organisational Principles

In approaching our task we will be guided by our own internal principles. We aim:

- to base all we do on the needs of individuals, communities and businesses and to measure our contribution against those needs;
- to work wholeheartedly in partnerships, which are essential to achieve our goals;
- to be radical and innovative in achieving the huge improvements needed;
- to be committed to maximum effectiveness and efficiency in all we do and fund; and
- to be open and accountable to those we serve.

9.4 Cross Cutting Themes

All the work undertaken by the National Council will contribute to our cross cutting themes of sustainability, equal opportunities, bilingualism and social inclusion.

9.5 Sustainability

Everything we do must help to create sustainable education and training of world-class standards for the future.

9.6 Equal Opportunities

In order to achieve our vision for Wales, there must be equality of opportunity for everyone, regardless of their circumstances. We are committed to ensuring that everyone can benefit from National Council support and will promote equality of opportunity in all activities.

9.7 Bilingualism

We will work with partners to understand patterns of demand for Welsh medium learning and how they can best be met, and to understand how we can respond to the increasing requirements for bilingualism in the public and private sectors.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**9.8 Social Inclusion**

Wales' success is dependent upon everyone playing their fullest possible part in their communities and the economy. We will make sure that our policies and services contribute to developing an inclusive society.

9.9 Moving Forward

The speed with which we can start to implement the necessary changes to make progress towards our vision is influenced by the following factors:

- the completion of our first corporate strategy and plan, which will be published in December following open consultation, and consideration by the National Assembly;
- our commitment to those who are already learners or are just about to start their programmes. Budgets for further education colleges have been allocated already for the academic year starting September 2001. Many learners will be on two-year programmes and we accept our commitment to them through to 2003. Many work based training programmes also run on well into late 2002 and beyond. Similarly, there is a commitment to school sixth forms and those starting two-year courses in September 2002;
- meaningful evaluation of inherited programmes;
- the development of new approaches which will bring success;
- the introduction of comprehensive new funding systems which will begin to take effect from April 2003;
- sizing the various tasks we face to meet the Assembly's requirements; and
- as an integral part of all this, prioritise actions and define clearly the respective contributions of public, business, community and individuals investment in learning.

9.10 Early Priorities for Action

The National Council must maintain significant momentum before the full fruits of these important processes can deliver the transformational changes that are demanded. We are aiming for greater integration and coherence of inherited programmes across Wales next year. We are examining the scope for the early redeployment of resources so that we can support pilot projects which test out emerging ideas and build new relationships to bring advances to learning outcomes. The National Council wants to see these projects take shape in the current year and grow from 2002. Our first operational plan identifies a number of objectives to move us forward this year. We will be working closely with CCETs to help develop and deliver the projects on the ground.

9.11 Budget Guidelines

The National Assembly requires that we construct our corporate plan on the basis of indicative allocations for 2002 - 2003 and 2003 - 2004 and assume that the allocation for 2004 - 2005 is the same as that for 2003 - 2004.

Over and above that we may include options based on different spending assumptions. These should assume a cash increase and decrease by 5% in

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grant-in-aid above/below the existing indicative baseline. We may include a third option on the basis of an assumption that we need to specify. Our initial assessment is that to meet the demands and expectations being placed upon us, it will be necessary to submit a third option. We appreciate that we will need to argue robust business cases for each new area of expenditure, specifying the impact, outcomes and learning targets.

Our indicative cash allocations are:

2001 - 2002 - £366,856,000, including £19,804,000 running costs.

2002 - 2003 - £366,156,000, including £17,004,000 running costs.

2003 - 2004 - £376,156,000, including £16,204,000 running costs.

2004 - 2005 - £376,156,000, including £16,204,000 running costs.

In addition we shall also receive additional budget for school sixth forms from April 2002.

Through our review of inherited programmes we would expect to produce savings which will be reinvested in new patterns of services. Similarly, CCETs have a vital role to identify cost reduction opportunities which would enable investment of savings in the CCETs priority areas. There can be no doubt, however, that the massive expansion of learning opportunities that the National Assembly wants to see will, in net terms, cost more.

9.12 Developing the Planning Framework

To assist the National Council in its work, four regional committees have been established. These will work closely with CCETs.

The non-executive regional committees will be regional ambassadors for the National Council, enthusing individuals, businesses and communities with the importance of learning and stimulating investment in learning. Successful committees will enable the National Council to relate local and regional needs to national thinking and develop learning and skills provision that will ensure sustainable success for all regions of Wales.

Regional committees will have a special relationship with CCETs, which are independent voluntary alliances of education and training providers. Regional committees will consult CCETs on the preparation of regional statements of needs and priorities. Once finalised these will be used by CCETs to prepare plans for provision for consideration by the National Council. This will provide a comprehensive and integrated action orientated planning system between regional committees and CCETs – these plans will be co-ordinated with Local Authority Community Plans and wider regional development strategies.

We are developing memorandums of understanding with each of our key partners; these will enable us to act in concert on strategy, planning, research, evaluation and implementation.

9.13 Regional Strategies and Local Needs

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Wales and its many diverse regions and communities have unique needs requiring tailor-made solutions. That is why we have developed a unique organisation, which mixes both all-Wales and regional functions.

Through our network of regional offices, supported by a small team covering all-Wales corporate functions, we will be able to respond quickly and effectively to local needs.

Performance Focus

9.14 Raising the standards of learning provision to world-class levels is central to our mission. To achieve this we will implement a performance management regime. This will be encouraged by rewarding good performance with funding to raise standards.

9.15 **Making Choices**

The National Council faces tough choices. There are many competing priorities. Strategic relevance, customer benefits, social inclusion, quality and international best practice will be our watchwords.

This draft corporate strategy will provide the overarching framework for making these choices. Through the inclusive and informed debate on this draft strategy we will ensure that the final version reflects a shared view on strategic aims and priorities.

Consultation Questions

What should be the contribution of others – businesses, communities, individuals?

Which of these areas should receive public financial investment and how do we make it sustainable?

What can be done to allocate funding to raise standards?

What criteria should we use to make decisions between competing priorities?

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**10.0 Measuring Success**

10.1 We need to develop targets and performance indicators to demonstrate what we are going to achieve, by when and how, and to measure progress towards our goals, ensuring that our resources are deployed efficiently and effectively to drive up standards.

10.2 Our approach to setting targets and performance measures will be to:

- achieve clarity in setting objectives;
- align targets and measures with our aims and objectives;
- focus on outcomes and the quality of learning;
- use international benchmarking as a measure of the performance required;
- ensure that indicators are based upon careful analysis;
- include softer qualitative information on stakeholders' views and customer attitudes;
- develop measures for supplier performance measurement including the voluntary and community sectors; and
- enable a comprehensive review of performance on a regular basis.

10.3 We have inherited a significant number of targets from the Education and Training Action Plan, BetterWales.com and our Remit Letter. These targets are aligned in Table 1 with our proposed goals. There are major gaps that we need to fill and concerns about the inadequacy of current targets.

10.4 During the consultation period of this document we will:

- validate the relevance of these targets to our emerging strategy;
- size the task implied by each of the targets, reviewing progress towards each one;
- update the relevant targets to 2010;
- develop relevant targets where there are gaps;
- develop international benchmarks;
- design performance measures for each target to capture achievement and outcomes; and
- introduce regular market research to ascertain attitudes to learning and obtain feedback on learning experiences.

Consultation Question

What measures and performance indicators do you think should be adopted?

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Table 1: Inherited Targets

<i>Essential Skills</i>	1999 Wales	1999 UK	2002	2004
Proportion of working age adults with functional basic skills in literacy	82%		90%	>90%
Proportion of working age adults with functional basic skills in numeracy	58%		60%	>60%
<i>Lifelong Learning for Individuals</i>				
Reduce the number of 16-18 yr olds without qualifications	13%	14%	14%	5%
Reduce the number of 19 year olds without an NVQ level 2 or equivalent	31%	25%	20%	<20%
Reduce the proportion of adults of working age without qualifications	19%	16%	14%	13%
Increase the proportion of adults of working age with an NVQ level 2 or equivalent	61%	65%	70%	>70%
Increase the proportion of adults of working age with an NVQ level 3 or equivalent	40%	44%	50%	>50%
Increase the proportion of adults of working age with NVQ level 4 or equivalent	22%	25%	40%	30%
Increase the no of participants in education and training	23%		10 000 annually	
% of FE courses of highest standard (Grade 1)	13%		15% by 2003	
% of FE courses to reach Grade 1 or 2	78%		80% by 2003	
<i>Knowledge Generation and Application</i>				
None formally identified.				
<i>Skills for Business</i>				
Investors in People Commitments				
50 or more employees			35%	38%
200 or more employees			75%	80%
Provide 14,000 Modern Apprenticeship places by 2003 for young people (in training in year)	8,766		14,000 by 2003	
Assist the management development of 4,500 SMEs per year	4,261		4,500 annually	
<i>Community Learning and Cultural Development</i>				
None formally identified.				

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**11.0 Developing our Organisation**

- 11.1 Our success in delivering the radical changes necessary to achieve this challenging strategy will be dependent upon our organisational philosophy, values and practices.
- 11.2 Commitment, innovation, performance focus and teamwork are the essential elements we are working on to become a high performance organisation. We aim to be an exemplar learning organisation.
- 11.3 Our internal philosophy is:
- to create an environment which values creativity and encourages staff to express their views, experiment and make the widest personal contribution to organisational goals;
 - to fulfil the potential of all staff through relevant and high quality training and management development;
 - to provide all staff with career opportunities through well-executed appraisal, internal recruitment and succession planning;
 - to work flexibly in teams across corporate, functional and regional boundaries, growing the experience, knowledge and contributions of all staff;
 - to create an inclusive, performance-based environment characterised by targeted achievements at directorate, regional, team and personal levels, underpinned by excellent two-way communications and feedback; and
 - to be a model of best practice as an employer, committed to equal opportunities and recognising the need for balance between work and domestic life.
- 11.4 It is our aim to achieve decentralised, devolved decision making and be responsive to national, regional and local needs. As quickly as is possible we will establish ourselves as a leading e.public service organisation; this will facilitate internal communications and enhance our knowledge management capability. This will enable us to develop solutions in response to local and national issues, achieve innovation throughout the organisation and continually improve.
- 11.5 International benchmarking will be a major feature of our organisation, as will researching best practice activities and effective operating procedures.
- 11.6 We have committed to seek Investors in People recognition across the National Council by 2002 and to use the European Excellence Model as our approach for continuous improvement.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**12.0 Next Steps**

- 12.1 During the consultation period to 9 November 2001 it is our intention to test the vision, strategic principles, each of our emerging strategies and the key areas for action. Please help us to do this by responding to the consultation questions listed throughout the draft corporate strategy.
- 12.2 Please present your comments in any way you chose on one, some or all of the issues raised, and in writing or electronically. Please note that your responses may be made available publicly unless you state otherwise.
- 12.3 Please respond to our consultation before 9 November 2001 to:

Fiona Marston
National Council – ELWa
Unit 6 St Asaph Business Park
St Asaph
Denbighshire
LL17 OLJ

Tel – 01745 538500
Fax – 01745 538501
e-mail – marstonf@elwa.org.uk

- 12.4 We will continue to develop our ideas with our customers and partners throughout the coming months before publishing our corporate strategy and plan in December 2001.
- 12.5 We will be holding four public meetings across Wales as part of the consultation process. Please call us on 08456 088 066 for further details.

Region	Location	Date	Time
North Wales	tbc	11 October 2001	6 – 8 pm
Mid Wales	tbc	10 October 2001	6 – 8 pm
South West Wales	tbc	17 October 2001	6 – 8 pm
South East Wales	tbc	24 October 2001	6 – 8 pm

These regional debates will be supported by five forums, one for each of our goals; conferences with our providers and special meetings with our partners.

- 12.6 Further copies of this draft corporate strategy can be obtained from Fiona Marston at the above address.
- 12.7 Alternatively you may access this strategy and other related information, including our operational plan for 2001 – 2002, a report highlighting our recent market research with individuals and the transcripts of the ELWa Debates on our website www.elwa.org.uk

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12.8 Should you wish to discuss this document please contact:

Olivia Schofield	North Wales	01745 538500
Gary Owen	South East Wales	01443 663663
Geoff Owen	North Wales	01745 538500
Nigel Arnold	South Wales	01792 354000
Annette Jones	Mid Wales	01686 622494

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

Annex One – The Agenda for Change

“The only way in which we can achieve enduring success as a nation is for lifelong learning – in the literal sense – to be embedded in the cultures of the diverse communities and organisations that make up modern Wales.”

National Assembly for Wales – May 2001

A1.1 The economy of Wales has undergone a period of huge economic and social change over the last 20 years and we have been particularly successful in transforming our economy in response to the structural decline of our traditional industries.

A1.2 **Wales today** is characterised by:

- the decline in older manufacturing sectors and growth in modern ones, renewable energy and cultural industries employ more people today than the coal and steel industries combined;
- the presence of a number of leading European, Japanese and US multinationals, many of them in the electronics, automotive and chemicals sectors;
- a growing service sector economy;
- recent success in attracting financial and business services companies;
- a rural economy facing a major point of change;
- high numbers of micro and small medium sized enterprises;
- the ability to take control of its own future following the creation of the National Assembly; and
- a society enriched by many varied and valuable communities contributing to our culture.

Wales – Facts and Figures

- Population – 2.937 million
- Of that 1.078 million people are in employment
- An additional 152,000 are self employed – 12.3% of workforce jobs
- This is an activity rate of over 73% of working age, compared to 79% in the UK
- However - 6.5 % of us – 86,000 - are unemployed (International Labour Office), compared to 5% in the UK
- 23% of those of working age are long term disabled
- 18.6% of us – 200,700 - work in manufacturing, compared to 16% in the UK
- 29% of us work in the public sector compared to 24% in the UK
- We have over 74,500 VAT registered businesses
- There are over 25,000 voluntary groups
- 19% of us work part time, compared to over 20% in England
- We earn, on average, around £368 each week, compared to £416 in England

A1.3 Employment in Wales is now at a historically high level with over 1.2 million people gainfully employed. Recent trends show a rapid increase in the number of women entering paid employment and the growth in part time employment.

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A1.4 Summary of Learning Trends in Wales

Wales has experienced the start of an education and learning revolution over the last few years:

- there has been a 70% increase in further education students since 1993;
- in the last 6 years over 25 000 young people have participated in the Modern Apprenticeship programme;
- almost 95% of 15 year olds achieve some formal qualifications;
- in 2000, 49% of 15 year olds gained at least 5 GCSE grades A-C or vocational equivalent;
- around 90% of Welsh 16 – 18 year olds are participating in education, training, or work; and
- around 57% of 25 to 39 year olds took part in learning in the last year compared to 25% of people aged 55 to 64.

How do people learn?

- Unemployed people appear more comfortable learning through books and written material.
- Those with no or low qualifications tend to want to learn through an evening course or with a group of people and a tutor.
- Young people on average are happier using a CD-ROM or working on a one-to-one basis with a tutor.
- Highly skilled people appear happier with written material or learning in a group with tutor support.
- Those in employment or with high qualifications are more likely to participate in learning.
- Learning linked to qualifications appears daunting for many of us.
- Small, bite sized chunks of learning are becoming more popular.
- Self-employed people appear keen on exchanging information and/or ideas with others.
- Preferences can be influenced by confidence levels and previous experiences.

FSW - 1998

Who is undertaking formal learning in Wales?

- There are over 224,000 people engaged in education and learning at FE institutions – this represents 9.4% of us compared to 9.2% in England.
- 42% - 93,263 are male.
- 58% - 130,879 are female.
- 66% are aged over 25.

Source ISR 1999 – 2000 (may be some double counting)

Learning Whilst at Work

- 48% of companies in Wales had funded off the job training in the 12 months prior to our survey.
- 63% of employees feel they had the opportunity to undertake training related to their current job.
- Training is more likely to be offered to more highly skilled and qualified workers than the low skilled.

FSW - 1998

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE

A1.5 A Changing Wales

The trends that characterise the changing world include:

- Globalisation

The opening up of world markets has vastly increased both consumer choice and the levels of competition facing many industries. Many goods previously produced in Wales can now be made more cheaply and efficiently elsewhere and sold anywhere in the world. Increasingly our businesses will have to compete in market areas where they hold a particular competitive advantage. There are very few parts of Europe where such advantages can be sustained by low skill, low cost production. The ability of Wales to adapt positively to these challenges will to a large extent determine our future economic success.

Increased competition means changing attributes and skills.

- Knowledge Driven Economy

Wales is now operating in a knowledge driven economy. This can be defined as an economy using information, ideas and relationships as its core attributes rather than natural or other physical assets. The rise of the knowledge economy is expected to move the more advanced countries towards higher value added products and services. In all probability future jobs growth in Wales will come from non-manual occupations, and economic value will lie more in knowledge than more tangible factors such as proximity of raw materials or the quality of conventional infrastructure.

*We are moving from brawn to brain, from hired hands to hired heads.
Competition is about kilobytes not kilograms – Nordstom and Ridderstrale*

- Changing Technology

New technology is creating new industries and changing old ones, as well as having a massive impact upon the way we live and work. All individuals, businesses and communities need constant access to the most up to date technology at all times. Technical skills will have a shorter life cycle, and people will no longer acquire all their technical skills at the start of their working life. Based on our experience of the pace of change we can be sure that a great many of the technical skills that will be required in 20 years time don't yet exist.

Companies and individuals need to become more flexible and adaptable to help generate creativity and manage change.

- A Demanding Population

As our economy grows our expectations rise and we want to spend more on luxury goods and services than on basic goods. This changing consumer demand has a big impact on the nature of our industries.

New ideas and services are essential if firms are to survive and grow.

- Demographic Change

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Wales has a declining birth rate and an ageing population. Forecasts indicate that, over the next two decades the number of 15–24 year olds will be static but the number of 45–64 year olds will rise considerably.

The source of new skills will need to be developed amongst older and already employed people or those currently inactive.

- Growing Awareness about Environmental and Social Issues

While economic growth is a major goal for Wales, there is concern about its social impact, with the risk of a wider gulf between the financial and technological 'haves' and 'have nots'. Changing patterns of work also affect family life and community engagement.

Wales needs to ensure that economic and social progress is complementary and compatible with the needs of sustainable development.

Changing economic and social conditions have given knowledge and skills – human capital – an increasingly central role in the economic success of nations and individuals. Information and communications technology, globalisation of economic activity and the trend towards greater personal responsibility and autonomy have all changed the demand for learning. The key role of competence and knowledge in stimulating economic growth has been widely recognised.

The non-economic returns to learning, in the form of enhanced personal well being and greater social cohesion, are viewed by many as being as important as the impact of increased earnings and economic growth. These personal and social goals of learning are not inconsistent with the goal of promoting economic performance, not least as well-rounded, flexible and adaptable individuals ready to continue learning throughout life are necessary for realising the economic goals of education.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2001

A1.6 Learning Becomes Paramount

Learning is the key to competitive advantage: therefore Wales needs to have the skills to compete in the 21st Century. Our ability to adjust our learning and skills provision to the needs of the market will determine our future success.

A1.7 The Challenges Facing Wales

Despite these successes to date a tremendous amount still needs to be done if Wales is to capitalise upon the opportunities presented by the new economy.

Messages for the Future*Changing Lifestyles*

- Competing demands: time is limited.
- Over 50s – acting younger / learning longer.
- Changing household structures.

Changing Industrial and Occupational Structures

- Employment growth – 2.5% per annum.
- Growth in managerial and professional structures.

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- Decline in semi-skilled manual trades.
 - More women in employment.
 - Increasing number of part time jobs.
 - Growth industries include communication, media, financial, business services, hospitality, cultural industries and education and health.
- Changing Workforce*
- Out-migration of young people.
 - In-migration of those aged 35 plus.
 - Increasing home working.
- Changing Wales*
- Regional economic and social differences across Wales.

A1.8 Competitiveness remains low

Wales has experienced continued but moderate economic growth in recent history.

However, more importantly, individual economic well being (as measured by GDP per head) is low when compared to the UK. This economic deficit is partly due to a lower rate of activity, and a slightly lower level of average productivity.

- **Productivity** - While average Welsh productivity is slightly lower than the UK, there are encouraging signs. Manufacturing productivity is high and continues to grow. Part of our productivity gap is as a result of our economic structure with high number of low productivity sectors such as tourism rather than IT services. There are a number of solutions to the productivity gap, including making existing business more productive and changing the sectors we are working in. Education, learning and the development of new skills are key levers to improving average productivity levels.
- **Activity Rates** – A situation where a quarter of those of working age are not even available for work is clearly unacceptable for any nation seeking to achieve economic and social success. Someone with no formal qualifications is twice as likely to be economically inactive as someone qualified to Level 3. Furthermore those aged over 45 are much more likely to be inactive than those aged 25-45, underlining the vital role of lifelong learning in combating economic activity.
- **Skill Shortages** – 30% of employers complain about skill shortages amongst the existing and potential workforce.

A1.9 Continued Investment in People

In order to compete in the new economy, we need to make further investments in all of our people, building upon the excellent results coming from many of our schools, where our young people achieve better results than those in England. This includes reducing those with low or basic skills, reducing the one in ten that are currently outside of education, training and work, developing the new skills and attitudes for the knowledge driven economy, and increasing the level of education and learning available in Wales to those of the best of the world.

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING COMMITTEE**A1.10 Social Cohesion**

An increasing divide between the highly skilled and the unskilled will undermine social cohesion. We need to ensure that everyone in Wales has the skills to contribute to and benefit from the future opportunities and that no one is excluded from learning.

For growth and prosperity to be sustainable, social cohesion is required; here too, the role of human capital is vital. - OECD 1998

A1.11 Attitude and Motivation

In many parts of Wales a positive attitude to learning exists, in other parts some people regard education and learning as a chore, something they are supposed to do (or have to do whilst at school). It is not seen as essential to life or indeed as the passport to a prosperous future. We need to change people's view of learning so that they see it as a way of creating a better future for themselves, their families, their businesses and their communities. We need to make it relevant to their lives.

"We have to find new ways to motivate people, we need to use their media and make learning fun – "edutainment" – Bryn Davies – ELWa debate, June 2001

Consultation Questions

What can you add to our analysis?

What other challenges need to be addressed by the National Council?