

Children and Young People Committee

Meeting Venue:
Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date:
17 November 2011

Meeting time:
09:15

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

Claire Morris
Committee Clerk
029 2089 8148 / 029 2089 8032
CYPCommittee@wales.gov.uk

Agenda

- 1. Introductions, apologies and substitutions (09:15 – 09:16)**
- 2. Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session (09:16 – 10:15) (Pages 1 – 14)**
Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL Cymru)

Dr Philip Dixon – Director of ATL Cymru
Simon Bracken – Head of Faculty Creative and Digital Technologies at Cardiff and Vale College

Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)

Elaine Edwards – General Secretary, UCAC
Rebecca Williams – Policy Officer, UCAC

NASUWT Cymru

Rex Phillips – Wales Organiser, NASUWT

- 3. Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session (10:15 – 11:00) (Pages 15 – 22)**
University and College Union (UCU)

Llew Williams – Political Liaison Officer, UCU Wales
Ian Bosworth – FE lecturer and Chair of Further Education Sector Committee, UCU

Wales

Children and Young People Committee

CYP(4)-09-11 Paper 1

Inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009

Evidence from ATL



Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL Cymru) and AMiE's response to The Children and Young People Committee inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

The Association of Teachers and Lecturers represents over 160,000 education professionals across the four constituent parts of the United Kingdom. It draws its membership from teachers and lecturers, leaders and support staff in maintained and independent schools, and Further Education Colleges. As well as campaigning vigorously to protect and enhance members' pay and conditions ATL also believes that the education profession has a key role in developing education strategy and policy. ATL Cymru represents over 6,500 education professionals in colleges and schools across the whole of Wales.

In January 2011, ATL and the Association of College Management (another TU affiliated union), realising their common shared values and commitments, formally merged. **The Association of Managers in Education, AMiE**, is the department of ATL that represents managers across the spectrum of colleges, secondary and primary schools.

As an organisation that crosses the traditional divide between schools and colleges, ATL is thus uniquely placed to voice concerns and provide innovative solutions to the challenges of post-16 education.

Response to terms of reference:

The effect that the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has had on young people aged 14-19 years old

The implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has increased the choice offered to learners by schools and colleges. There are good examples of additional courses being offered to cater better for students that previously may have been overlooked, for example, level 1 vocational courses offered in collaboration with an FE institution. However, the pressure of targets and level 2 threshold, etc is in the opposite direction. In addition there are examples of schools offering inappropriate courses that generate little genuine demand from students taught by staff with little understanding of the course structure or the subject and have been added to the menu merely to achieve the arbitrary 30 options.

There is a demand for level 2 vocational programmes for under 16 learners but it is often the case that the existing qualifications are not appropriate for under 16s. This issue is an important one and needs to be addressed. It is also imperative that there is impartial advice and guidance given to pupils in year 9 about vocational qualifications. If there is little understanding of vocational qualifications, then how can pupils be given appropriate advice? Is this advice objective enough?

The unrealistic equivalence value of vocational courses (e.g. a 2 GCSE equivalent NVQ that can be taught comfortably in the time for 1 GCSE and to pupils that are much younger or of much lower ability) has served to put pressure on schools to push students into courses for the purposes of the school's targets and position. We are concerned that the new banding initiative will increase this pressure. At the outset we wish to state our firm conviction that qualifications are for the young person and not the institution.

The collaborative provision of subjects is fine in principle but in practice has had an effect on the rest of the curriculum for the majority of other students. For instance, providing an afternoon a week during which collaborative delivery can take place restricts what the other students can do in school; this in turn has an effect on KS3 curriculum delivery. The Welsh Government suggests that collaboration can be used to deliver other subjects that are under pressure within the curriculum to cut costs e.g. MFL courses. This may be financially appealing but is pedagogically flawed. Language teachers argue that language teaching is best delivered little and often.

Whether the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009* has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16
It is unclear whether the implementation of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure* has had an effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education. Many members believe that increased rates of retention are more influenced by the current lack of opportunities for work than any desire on the part of young people to remain in education.

There are concerns over the managing of progression of learners from a level 1 vocational course to a level 2 vocational course. Many schools expect the progression to be automatic, whereas the entry requirements for the level 2 course at the college may be more than simply a level 1 qualification. There needs to be agreement between providers to ensure appropriate progression for learners between institutions. Currently there is no offer post -16 for a student to study a mix of academic and vocational programmes. There are few vocational courses offered that fit alongside academic programmes of study. It still remains one or the other for the vast majority of students' post 16

Some members believe there are cases where a school, offering level 3 vocational courses, retains students that would not have coped with AS/A levels because they can cope with the less academically rigorous NVQ or BTEC, etc. Some students have therefore remained in school who may have traditionally gone into work based training or FE. These qualifications can foster the desire for a university place but many universities are reluctant to accept students thus qualified.

Whether young people aged 14-19 have a wider choice for academic and vocational courses as a result of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*

Young people do undoubtedly have a wider choice of academic and vocational courses as a result of the measure, but the absolute value of such a wider choice is disputed within the profession.

In schools the pressure for additional choice has often meant additional vocational courses. These are appropriate for some, but other pressures on schools mean that students may be steered towards them for other ends. The GCSE equivalence can cause distortion. It must also be remembered that there is more to education than merely preparation for work. Academic qualifications tend to be more general and equip students for a wider range of employment or further study, vocational qualifications tend to be more narrowly focused on a particular vocation that may not be needed in such numbers in a local community.

Vocational course are valuable for many students but where a school encourages 'academic' children to follow a course in order to boost the school's performance the student could find that the qualification is not highly valued in higher education (for example, students who take a BTEC in Science, which is the equivalent to 4 GCSEs for the school, find they cannot study A Level Sciences but only Level 3 BTECs, which then preclude entry to many Universities).

What practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*

There are still many practical problems that need to be addressed. Clarification is needed regarding who is responsible for the behaviour of pupils, particularly when there are students from different schools with little or no direct supervision. Another issue to be addressed is the cost of transport. Transport is expensive, complex to organise, and in a rural area can lead to unreasonable travel times or sometimes impossible journeys. One member from North Wales stated that it is impossible for some of their students to get home by bus from an afternoon session in the local FE college. In some cases there are no buses to some areas until the following morning! There has been an absence of forward planning transport locally due to implementation timescales.

Synchronised timetabling is an issue that can lead to the timetable being written for a relatively small proportion of the cohort and being detrimental to the vast majority.

The suspension of NPFS has meant that money no longer follows students. This has been a disincentive to larger institutions providing the additional courses to their smaller neighbours.

The management time invested in collaboration is out of all proportion to any benefit. If meetings were properly costed as well as including the transport costs, the true cost of collaboration would be seen.

There are still unresolved problems regarding pastoral care. Colleges usually refer issues back to the home school to be dealt with. The differing rules and culture of a school and college can cause confusion. Many college staff have relatively little experience of dealing with the 14 year old age group which can prove difficult. One member in FE commented that in their area a fair amount of training had been provided to staff dealing with the 14 year old age group. There may be a longer term need for a different contract for staff delivering sessions to 14-16 year olds.

There are also issues around monitoring student progress and behaviour across institutions.

Contact:

Dr Philip Dixon
Director, ATL Cymru
Tel: 02920 465 000
Email: cymru@atl.org.uk

Children and Young People Committee

CYP(4)-09-11 Paper 2

Evidence from UCAC

Inquiry into the Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

UCAC education union welcomes the opportunity to respond to this inquiry by the Assembly's Children and Young People Committee

UCAC is an union with 5,000 members consisting of school teachers and headteachers, and Further Education and Higher Education lecturers in Wales. Its headquarters is in Aberystwyth, and it operates through the medium of Welsh.

1. What effect has the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 had to date on young people aged 14-19 years? Do young people have a wider choice of academic and vocational courses as a result of the Measure?

There is certainly a wider choice of courses and qualifications following the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure, particularly in terms of vocational courses and qualifications.

2. Do Welsh language pupils get the same depth and range of choice?

This varies. On the whole, institutions are able to offer a sufficiently broad range to meet the requirements of the Measure, but provision is not necessarily as broad as the range available to English-medium pupils.

The situation is improving in terms of the breadth of choice, but it is a continuous struggle to overcome difficulties. The main difficulty is the lack of partners who are qualified to provide Welsh-medium courses (FE Colleges and private sector provision is weak) and the geographical distances to the nearest qualified partners. There are significant costs involved in overcoming these problems.

3. If the Measure has resulted in a wider choice of academic and vocational courses, has this had any unintended consequences for other subjects, for example modern languages?

Naturally, expanding the range of courses has affected certain subjects because the same number of students are distributed between a larger number of subjects. Schools with fewer than 1,000 pupils in particular are finding it difficult to provide

sufficient numbers of courses in a cost-effective way, unless they have invested in on-site facilities (facilities for construction, hairdressing courses etc.).

The groups in some subjects have decreased significantly, and in some cases, the numbers are so small that it is difficult to justify offering certain subjects at all. In general, it is the 'more traditional' subjects that are suffering; modern foreign languages are suffering consistently, and numbers fluctuate from year to year in other subjects.

This problem is at its worst in two-stream schools, where pupil numbers are divided between the English and Welsh streams, creating very small groups.

4. Has the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16?

In some institutions, the numbers are not staggering, but there may be some indication that the wider choice of available courses has been a factor in attracting some to stay on at school beyond the compulsory age - but it is difficult to measure. In others, the change has been much more significant; those institutions tend to be larger, and are able to offer wider on-site provision.

5. What practical problems are being addressed in order to implement the Measure? Are there implementation problems for example:

- **in rural areas:** The distance between schools and colleges creates practical and financial problems in rural areas; transporting students from one institution to another is a significant cost to schools and colleges and can use up quite a chunk of teaching time. The 14-19 grant has been absolutely essential in securing the necessary transport to be able to expand provision. It is not unusual for schools to have to arrange buses, mini buses and even taxis for learners, as public transport is not convenient in terms of travel times or locations.

- in relation to the provision by local authorities of a minimum of thirty learning programmes, including five vocational options + delivering local area

curricula: In urban areas this is not too much of a problem; collaborative working between institutions can be effective enough, especially in areas where there is strong support from the Local Authorities (eg Cynnal in the north), but it is certainly more difficult in rural areas, for the reasons outlined above. In general, it is fair to say that 30 is felt to be too ambitious, and perhaps, somewhat excessive; there was no need to set the number at 30 in order to extend provision, and to ensure a minimum number of vocational courses. It has been a huge challenge for many organizations.

- **delivery of learning (including the use of IT and remote learning):** There have been positive developments in e-learning as a result of implementing the Measure, and this needs to continue to develop; once again the role of Local Authorities is extremely important.

The experience of teachers is that video-conferencing is an effective option for post-16 students, especially if the video-conferencing sessions are combined with regular face-to-face sessions.

The remote sessions are more difficult with the 14-16 age group. If you need staff to supervise pupils in the video-conferencing room while the teacher / lecturer teaches remotely, questions arise regarding the effective use of human resources but otherwise schools have to deal with disciplinary problems as a result of video-conferencing sessions.

Another aspect of remote learning is that it is often delivered by private providers, and the institution purchasing the provision must be confident of its quality and must be able to deal with any problems that arise in this context.

- **transport and travel issues:** See above, this causes real problems in rural areas.

Again, this varies according to the age group concerned. With post-16 groups there is no problem in terms of discipline, or coping with institutions which are potentially very different to their own. But with the 14-16 cohort, it is often necessary for staff to accompany the pupils to ensure discipline, safety and familiarization with the new institution. Again, the question regarding the effective use of staff arises.

In urban areas it is more common to expect staff (rather than students) to travel from site to site, and problems have arisen with this arrangement also. Often not enough time is allowed for travel (traffic problems, parking difficulties, reaching the classroom / lecture after reaching destination) and this causes unfair and undue stress on staff. There are examples of staff missing breaks or lunch time in order to travel from one site to another.

- **Any other issues?**

- (a) We are aware that the need to deal with private providers are placing a bureaucratic burden on schools; they have to deal with unfamiliar contractual issues and do not possess the expertise to deal effectively and confidently with them. In addition, courses purchased by private providers, including Further Education Colleges, can be extremely expensive.

- (b) There is an enormous problem on the horizon; there will be a cut of 12% in the 14-19 budget in April 2012, and further cuts of 7% from April 2013. That is, cuts of nearly 20% over two years. It is difficult to imagine how it will be possible to meet the requirements of the Measure under these budgetary circumstances.
- (c) Some schools have reported that they feel that their efforts to expand the provision have not been recognized, and especially so by new banding system. The reason for this is that the banding system takes the **Level 2 + Threshold** as the criterion (ie 5 GCSEs or equivalent, grade C or above, including Welsh / English and Mathematics), where the proposed Learning and Skills Measure takes the **Level 2 Threshold** (5 GCSE's or equivalent, grade C or above, *in any qualification*). They feel they are not being rewarded in any way for their efforts to expand the provision to include vocational courses and qualifications. This is also the case in another elements of the banding system, namely the use of capped Points Score (= the best 8 GCSEs or equivalent) rather than the wider Points Score - a score that has risen greatly in schools which have widened provision significantly, but which is not recognized by the banding system.

6. Is the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 being implemented consistently across all local authorities?

We have been told that 14-19 plans will need to be developed and agreed on a regional level (consortium) from April 2012 onwards, rather than at Authority level. There will be advantages and disadvantages to the new arrangement no doubt, but it will mean change, and accountability issues are bound to arise eg financial accountability; accountability regarding meeting the requirements of the Bill, accountability regarding needs and priorities.

7. Are vulnerable learners, particularly those with additional learning needs, able to benefit from the provisions in the Measure?

In some cases, increasing the range of provision offers an opportunity for learners with ALN to stay in the 6th form.

We anticipate that the cuts mentioned in question 5 above will reduce the capacity of the Measure to benefit these particular students. Currently, at Key Stage 4, the Measure focuses mainly on Level 2 courses, and far less on Level 1 courses; at Key Stage 5, the focus is on Level 3 courses rather than courses at Level 2. But it is the lower level courses that usually offer the most benefit to students with additional learning needs, and encourage them to continue their education beyond compulsory school age. When funding is cut, each educational institution will focus on achieving

the statutory requirements, and the unintended side effect will be that the courses at lower levels, and therefore students who are more likely to leave education, will suffer most. This will undo much good work done to date.

Children and Young People Committee

CYP(4)-09-11 Paper 3

Inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009

Evidence from NASUWT Cymru



WRITTEN
EVIDENCE

**The National Assembly for Wales
Children and Young People Committee
Inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills
Measure 2009
17 November 2011**

1. The NASUWT welcomes the opportunity to submit written evidence to the Children and Young People Committee CYPC on the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009 (LSWM 2009).
2. The NASUWT is the largest teachers' union in Wales and the UK representing teachers and school leaders.

GENERAL COMMENTS

3. The NASUWT has responded to various consultations on and related to the LSWM 2009 and sees no need to rehearse here the views that have been expressed previously. Those consultation responses are a matter of public record and the NASUWT urges the members of the CYPC to review those documents to inform this inquiry.

4. The NASUWT will, therefore, concentrate on the terms of reference for this inquiry but maintains that it may be too early to make an informed assessment of effects of the LSWM 2009.
5. Further, the NASUWT notes that the Welsh Government has announced proposals to move the 14-19 Learning Pathways grant funding from funding individual local authorities to funding regional consortia in 2012-13 which, if implemented, could impact significantly on the implementation of the Measure.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

6. The NASUWT is not sure of **the effect that the implementation of the LSWM 2009 has had on young people aged 14-19 years.**
7. However, the NASUWT recognises that providing a greater variety of post-16 courses, both academic and vocational, has to be to the benefit of young people; not least, since it will encourage pupils to remain in education.
8. On the negative side, the well rehearsed concerns of the NASUWT in relation to the loss of school-based sixth form provision in parts of Wales are becoming a reality.
9. The NASUWT suggests that the CYPC should consider carefully the picture that is emerging across Wales in terms of choice of setting available to young people for post 16 study and the factors that determine the choice that is available.
10. The NASUWT points to the Neath Port Talbot Authority that moved to a tertiary system of education prior to incorporation where the choice of

setting for post-16 studies is determined by linguistic and denominational factors.

11. Again, the NASUWT is not sure **whether the implementation of the LSWM 2009 has had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training after the end of compulsory education at age 16.**
12. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the initial response of young people is to choose to stay on in education or training, post-16, but whether or not this can be attributed to the provisions of the LSWM 2009 is a matter of debate, particularly in a time of recession and lack of job opportunity.
13. In addition, the NASUWT suggests that the CYPC should look carefully at the drop-out rate of young people who initially opt to pursue post-16 studies as it has been suggested that young people find the travel associated with their chosen course of study too onerous and concern has also been expressed about the quality of some provision.
14. The NASUWT acknowledges that the LSWM has provided **young people aged 14-19 with a wider choice for academic and vocational courses** as a result of the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*.
15. However, the NASUWT remains concerned that the options initially available to young people, though the local curricula, may not materialise because of a lack of take-up.
16. The NASUWT is aware that issue of viability, lack of funding and prohibitive travel arrangements has resulted in young people being denied access to courses.

17. Further, the NASUWT is aware that pupils with additional learning needs often follow entry level and level 1 courses, known as 'Enrichment' courses. These courses are planned, organised and coordinated by schools according to the needs of their pupils. Funding for these courses is determined on a quota basis and where a school exceeds their quota the school has to find the funding.
18. The NASUWT is aware that schools are concerned that the central funding that provides for the quotas for these courses may be withdrawn, as the courses are below level 2, and that this could result in extremely vulnerable young people being disadvantaged.
19. The NASUWT is concerned that where **practical problems have been addressed in order to implement the *Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009*** it has led to attempts to fractionalise and offer casual contracts to the school workforce.
20. In the last academic year, the NASUWT had to move into dispute over redundancies with several schools, and a further education institution, as a direct consequence of the implementation of LSWM 2009.
21. In the schools in question, claims were made that changes to the curriculum resulting from the implementation of the learning pathways agenda and, to some extent, the Welsh Baccalaureate, meant that schools no longer required staff to work on a full-time basis and attempts were made to dismiss staff as redundant and re-engage them on lesser contracts.
22. Naturally, the NASUWT questioned the validity of such claims and was successful in resolving some of the disputes without recourse to industrial action. However, industrial action was taken in three schools in an attempt to avoid compulsory redundancy.

23. In the further education institution, a change to the post-16 funding methodology was cited as the reason for the redundancy proposals. This claim was strenuously denied by the Welsh Government. Industrial action was followed. Compulsory redundancy was avoided but courses and jobs were lost, and hours were reduced.

24. In addition, the NASUWT is aware that school timetables have been constrained, with lessons blocked for two or three periods in order to accommodate collaborative arrangements between schools and between school and colleges.



Rex Phillips

Wales Organiser

For further information on this written evidence contact Rex Phillips, Wales Organiser.

NASUWT Cymru

Greenwood Close

Cardiff Gate Business Park

Cardiff

CF23 8RD

029 2054 6080

www.nasuwt.org.uk

nasuwt@mail.nasuwt.org.uk

Children and Young People Committee

CYP(4)-09-11 Paper 4

Inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure 2009

Evidence from UCU



**WALES
CYMRU**

**RESPONSE TO: NAFW Children and
Young People Committee's inquiry
into the implementation of the
Learning and Skills Measure (2009)**

CONSULTATION

Contact Details:

Lleu Williams
Political Liaison Officer
UCU
Unit 33, The Enterprise Centre
Tondu
BRIDGEND
CF32 9BS

Tel: 01656 721951

E-mail: lwilliams@ucu.org.uk

The University and College Union (UCU) represents more than 120,000 academics, lecturers, trainers, instructors, researchers, managers, administrators, computer staff, librarians and postgraduates in universities, colleges, prisons, adult education and training organisations across the UK.

UCU is the largest post-school union in the world: a force working for educators and education that employers and the government cannot ignore.

It was formed on 1 June 2006 by the amalgamation of two strong partners - the Association of University Teachers (AUT) and NATFHE-the University & College Lecturers' Union - who shared a long [history](#) of defending and advancing educators' employment and professional interests.

UCU Wales welcomes the opportunity to respond to the committee's request for evidence to their inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) 2009. In our original submission to the Welsh Government's consultation on the Measure, we welcomed the recognition by the Government of the need to regulate the delivery of provision for learners within the 14-19 age cohorts in Wales, and we still continue to believe this.

Previous Welsh Assembly Governments had failed to understand the damaging impact of competition on the provision of education and training. Access to wide ranging learning provision for all 14-19 learners is a pre-requisite in enabling learners to fulfill their potential and become fully engaged in their communities and working life. We believe that a curriculum which meets the needs of all 14-19 year old learners is a must for a healthy, productive society in Wales.

UCU Wales would also like to raise concerns with regards to the timing of this inquiry. The Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) has only been in place for two years, with the current targets set for 2012. Whilst UCU Wales understands the reasoning behind conducting the inquiry now, we feel that the Measure needs to be embedded properly before a full review is conducted, and UCU Wales believes this issue will need to be revisited in three years time.

What effect has the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 had to date on young people aged 14-19 years? Do young people have a wider choice of academic and vocational courses as a result of the measure?

The Measure was meant to give learners a wider choice of academic and vocational courses, and in most instances, we believe this to be true. UCU Wales believes there might still be some instances, whereupon learners aren't quite being given the choices that the Measure was meant to give them. We believe that one of the reasons for this is down to the fact that the Measure was meant to offer learners a minimum of thirty courses by 2012; and not 2011, therefore there is still time to achieve this.

UCU Wales does have some concerns over collaboration across local authorities, schools and further education colleges. UCU Wales is concerned that some, not all, schools are intent on providing the wide range of courses themselves. It should be noted that for some courses, FE colleges specialise in

certain courses with facilities and teaching expertise that schools are unable to match at the moment, and therefore learners should be allowed to access education for which is the best education for them, be it at school or an FE college. To ensure that the Measure is successful, we need to ensure that there is proper collaboration right across the sector.

UCU Wales is aware of some excellent examples of proper collaboration, notably in Carmarthenshire where the local authority, schools and Coleg Sir Gar are working closely to deliver on the Measure through the tri-schools reorganisation plans. UCU Wales believes proper collaboration will take time embed properly. Once this has happened, we would recommend looking again at the success of the Measure.

Do Welsh language pupils get the same depth and range of choice?

UCU Wales believes that Welsh language pupils unfortunately do not get the same depth and range of choice as their English language counterparts. Whilst UCU Wales recognises the great strides that are being made in Wales in light of the Welsh Medium Education strategy, we still believe more needs to be done. The provision for Welsh or bilingual education in the academic stream usually results in the pupil having to continue their A-levels, in the main, at the sixth form at their Welsh medium comprehensive, because the provision is still not available at their local FE college.

In addition, there are several instances whereupon pupils are unable to access vocational courses at their local FEI due to the lack of Welsh provision available. For instance, in one case, a pupil attended a local FE college to study Carpentry, where the member of staff was a fluent Welsh speaker, but wasn't confident enough with terminology in English and therefore taught through the medium of English.

UCU Wales believes that if the Welsh Government is serious about Welsh medium education they must recognise the constraints on the Welsh medium education strategy. UCU Wales believes these constraints will continue until they fund appropriate training for teaching and lecturing staff. Being a fluent Welsh speaker does not necessarily mean that you have the skills to teach through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. UCU Wales believes if this issue is to be addressed, the Welsh Government must invest in staff training to ensure that they are able to deliver bilingually.

UCU Wales believes that the new Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol will substantially increase Welsh medium provision in higher education as well the increase in the number of staff who are able to teach through the medium of Welsh. UCU Wales believes the next step for Welsh medium education would be the creation of a equivalent body for further education and 14-19 education to ensure similar developments are made in the sector.

UCU Wales believes strongly that current commitments by the Welsh Government to expand Welsh medium provision are important, but need to be implemented further to ensure that Welsh language pupils are offered the same depth and range of choice as their English language counterparts..

If the measure has resulted in a wider choice of academic and vocational courses, has this had any unintended consequences for other subjects, for example modern languages?

UCU Wales are not in a position to comment on this issue, and would leave it those better placed to do so.

Has the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 had any effect on the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education or training at the end of compulsory education at 16?

UCU Wales believes this would be hard to measure currently as there are many other factors affecting the numbers of young people choosing to stay on in education. Due to the economic climate, many young people are choosing to stay on in education. Additionally, there is a significant lack of jobs available for young people; youth unemployment currently stands at around 20%.

UCU Wales believes due to these factors, as well as the short life span of the Measure's implementation, you cannot attribute the numbers staying on in education solely on the Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) 2009. But UCU Wales believes if we get the Measure right, then it can benefit the learner.

What practical problems are being addressed in order to implement the Measure? Are there implementation problems for example:

- in rural areas
- the provision by local authorities of a minimum of thirty learning programmes, including five vocational options
- delivering of local area curricula
- delivery of learning (including the use of IT and remote learning)
- transport and travel issues
- any others?

UCU Wales believes that learning providers would be better placed to comment on this issue.

Is the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 being implemented consistently across all local authorities?

UCU Wales believe that anecdotal evidence currently suggests that this is not the case.

Are vulnerable learners, particularly those with additional learning needs, able to benefit from the provisions in the Measure?

UCU Wales are not in a position to comment on whether vulnerable and ALN learners are benefiting from the provision in the Measure.

Is learning support being delivered effectively?

UCU Wales is not in a position to comment on whether learning support is being delivered effectively.

What effect is the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 having on further education colleges?

UCU Wales believes that the Measure is driving the transformation agenda forward as it removes the market in the sector, where collaboration is working effectively.

Despite this, UCU Wales believes the Measure has led to an increased pressure on lecturers with regards to professional practice. As part of the Measure, learners in the 14-16 age cohorts attend lectures at FE colleges, which increase pressure on lecturers as they have not received the training needed to work with this age cohort. For example, learners at 14 years of age require more supervision in a workshop environment than that an older learner would, and this impairs the quality of lecture being delivered as a higher percentage of the teaching session is spent on supervising rather than educating.

UCU Wales understands that the previous, as well as the current, FE PGCE course doesn't cover working with learners under the age of 16. UCU Wales would encourage that if lecturers are expected to work with learners under the age of 16 that these needs are catered for in any future PGCE courses for FE.

UCU Wales was contacted previously with regards to contributing to Welsh Government guidance on this issue. This guidance cannot be found on the Welsh Government website, and UCU Wales would urge that this guidance, if it exists, is updated and published as a matter of urgency.

Lecturers in these environments need the relevant training and support in order to be able to teach these learners effectively. UCU Wales believes this is essential if learners are to receive a high standard of education, and if the Measure is going to benefit these learners.

ENDS