

CYPE(6)-13-23 - Paper to note 2

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

Children, Young People and Education Committee

Vivienne Stern,
Chief Executive, Universities UK

Vanessa Wilson,
Chief Executive, Universities Alliance

Rachel Hewitt,
Chief Executive, Million Plus

Dr Tim Bradshaw,
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Chief Executive, UCAS

Gordon McKenzie,
Chief Executive, Guild HE

Alastair Sim,
Chief Executive, Universities Scotland

Cc. Philip Blaker
Chief Executive, Qualifications Wales

22 March 2023

Your views on the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021

Dear colleagues,

The Senedd's Children, Young People and Education Committee is currently undertaking a long-term inquiry into the implementation of key education reforms passed during the last Senedd (2016-2021), including the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021.

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As you will be aware, Wales' education system is undergoing substantial reform. The Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 established the Curriculum for Wales ("the Curriculum"). The Curriculum was introduced in primary schools in September 2022 and will become statutory in Year 7 and Year 8 in September 2023. The Curriculum will continue to be rolled out to additional year groups as these cohorts move through secondary school until it reaches Year 11 in 2026/27.

The Curriculum is driven by 'four purposes' and aims to focus on teaching and learning 'what matters' within six Areas of Learning and Experience. The Welsh Government states that the aim of the Curriculum is to "prepare young people to develop higher standards of literacy and numeracy, to become more digitally and bilingually competent, and to be confident, capable and compassionate citizens – citizens of Wales and citizens of the world."¹

The Curriculum will be taught to learners between 3 and 16. It requires substantial reform of qualifications, which is being taken forward by the independent qualifications regulator, Qualifications Wales. Whilst A and AS levels are not being reformed, and whilst some of the detailed substance of future qualifications at age 16 is not yet fully known, we want to gauge the views of the higher education sector on whether and how the curriculum reforms will benefit Welsh young people and Wales more widely.

As part of our work into these important and far-reaching education reforms, I would very much welcome your views² on any aspect of the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, and specifically what you consider the impact of the Curriculum will be on:

- Welsh children and young people's admissions to higher education; and
- the general skills that Welsh children and young people will need to succeed on higher education courses.

Our scrutiny of the implementation of curriculum reform is ongoing during this Senedd (until spring 2026) and we welcome submissions at any time during that period. However, it would be very helpful if we could receive any response you wish to make on the above points in particular by 24 April 2023 so it can inform our next set of scrutiny activities for this inquiry, which include scrutiny of the Minister for Education and Welsh Language on 10 May.

¹ Welsh Government, 'Education is Changing'

² Qualifications Wales has been undertaking a series of consultations and engagement with stakeholders on the future of qualifications and we are not seeking to duplicate or supplant that work in any way. We would be very keen to hear your views so that they can inform our own work in this area.

If you have any concerns over this timescale, or would like any more information about this inquiry or the Committee more generally, please don't hesitate to contact our clerks (SeneddChildren@Senedd.Wales). Otherwise, I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.