

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

Statws y Cymhwyster Bagloriaeth Cymru | The status of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

WB 17

Ymateb gan: Comisiynydd y Gymraeg  
Response from: Welsh Language Commissioner

## 1. The context of this response

The principal aim of the Commissioner in exercising her functions is to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. The Commissioner will also address the official status of the Welsh language in Wales. By imposing standards, the Commissioner will place statutory duties on organisations to use Welsh. Another of the Commissioner's strategic aims is to influence the consideration given to the Welsh Language in policy development. That is what is done in relation to the remit of the current consultation. Further information on the Commissioner's work can be found on the website [www.comisiynyddygyymraeg.cymru](http://www.comisiynyddygyymraeg.cymru).

## 2. Comments

Both education and the workplace are central to the growth of the Welsh language. While our education system is the main source of new Welsh speakers, the use of the Welsh language in the workplace helps to increase the status of the language, normalise its everyday use, and improve speakers' confidence. Only by combining support for the Welsh language in education and in the workplace will it be possible to develop skilled bilingual workforce in Wales.

However, we know that a significant cohort of Welsh speakers lose their Welsh language skills at the end of their statutory education. Clearly, post-16 education – the period bridging the world of education and the world of work – is essential for ensuring that learners continue to use, develop and take full advantage of their Welsh language skills.

Programmes such as the Welsh Baccalaureate, which set learners' employability at the heart of the provision, can make an important contribution to realising this vision.

However, unfortunately the data on the use of the Welsh language in the Welsh Baccalaureate is very scarce. For example, it would seem that there are some basic issues regarding the availability of the data on the number and percentage of learners completing the Baccalaureate in Welsh. It is not known either what are the views on the advantages and disadvantages of completing the framework in Welsh; or what factors are likely to influence these views. Without more data, it is difficult to assess to what extent the Welsh Baccalaureate delivers for the Welsh language and its speakers.

I therefore encourage the Committee to dedicate specific attention to the issue during oral evidence sessions following gathering written evidence. This is especially important given that the Welsh language is not a specific consideration in terms of reference of the current consultation. My officers would welcome an opportunity to discuss some specific aspects that merit attention with your clerk.

### **3. Conclusion**

I trust that my comments above will be of interest to you and I kindly ask you to consider them when planning the oral evidence sessions.