

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 05

Ymateb gan Individual
Response from: Individual

As a current Welsh Baccalaureate coordinator I would like to respond to the survey and provide some feedback from a school level.

- The extent to which the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification is understood and valued by learners, parents, education professionals in schools and colleges, higher education institutions and employers:

As a Centre we spend a considerable amount of time informing our parents about the complexities of the WBQ and SCC. This is not straightforward and is a complex qualification to understand. The fact that some students achieve A*-C at the end of the two years and others achieve a Pass* and Pass confuses parents and pupils. The individual tasks being assessed throughout the two years as Distinction, Merit, Level 2 pass and Level 1 pass is also confusing. Surely this can be simplified and a normal grading system from A*-G like all other GCSE qualifications.

- The extent to which the Welsh Baccalaureate is considered by learners, education professionals in schools and colleges, employers and higher education to be an equivalent, rigorous qualification;

Learners see this qualification as rigorous and important in our Centre, because we spend a considerable amount of time reinforcing its importance. The assessment and control measures are followed carefully here and sufficient time is given to the course.

- The status of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification in schools and colleges, including the Welsh Government's target for universal adoption and the potential impact of this approach;

This qualification was introduced by the Welsh Government and was initially given a very high status in terms of its placement in the performance measures of schools. This has resulted in school changing options available to students and teaching composition in order to deliver this qualification to a whole cohort. This was very successfully done in the Centre I work in. However I feel very strongly that the Welsh Government have sent very mixed messages out about the importance of this course to parents, colleges and universities since its introduction. It feels currently like the WBQ and skills challenge certificate is on shaky ground and truthfully we don't know how important this course is still considered by the WG. This lack of direction has very much reduced the value that parents and pupils put on this course.

- The wider impact of studying the Welsh Baccalaureate on other curriculum subjects and education provision;

The introduction of the Skills challenge certificate on a whole cohort level has meant that one option line had to be dropped to ensure that there was sufficient time for the teaching of this course. This was also amplified by the need to provide full cohort Welsh and RE lessons. Therefore our students do now have a reduced number of choices.

- The benefits and disadvantages of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification to learners, schools and colleges, higher education institutions and employers.

This course is hugely beneficial to our learners and provides them with many skills that they do not learn in other subject areas. I hope that this is felt by employers and universities. However the local college tells our students they do not need the course and that it is not useful to them, and it is not promoted at a post-16 level. This has a negative impact on our students.