

Review of Qualifications 14–19 progress report

“Qualifications that are understood and valued and meet the needs of our learners and the Welsh economy.”

Ministers broadly accepted all the recommendations of the Review in January 2013. The table below shows all commitments coupled with a timeline and progress to date. This report will be updated on a quarterly basis.

Commitment	Timeline	Progress to date
National qualifications system		
1.1 Develop a coherent, high-quality, robust and distinctive national qualifications system for 14 to 19-year olds in Wales, aligned with wider policy context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation plan agreed. Content to be communicated July 2013 • Benefits defined and realisation plan developed by Dec 2014 • New planning and funding system in place that reflects and implements Review of Qualifications recommendations Sept 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation plan agreed and due to be communicated in July • Qualifications Wales advisory board established and meets on a bi-monthly basis • Stakeholder reference group established and meets on a termly basis • Several working groups established to look at specific policy areas
1.2 Promote and explain qualifications available in Wales to improve understanding and recognition and ensure portability in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication strategy approved by Ministers summer 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft communications strategy sent to the Minister for consideration <p>Key features include:</p>

<p>the rest of the UK and worldwide</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new brand identity for Qualifications Wales • web-based information • building confidence campaign to promote qualifications within Wales and UK • Ministerial led stakeholder conference in autumn 2013 • Market research commissioned to look at the appropriateness and currency of the various qualification terms and levels
<p>1.3 Develop and implement programme-based approach to qualification delivery for learners at Entry level, ensure appropriate qualifications are available to meet needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial discussions and visits to be held with interested parties and scoping of the issues completed by Oct 2013 • Plan in place by Sept 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practitioners from broad range of provider settings (e.g. further education, special and mainstream schools, Pupil Referral Units, Youth Services) attended two half-day workshops to explore good practice in Entry level qualifications • Work is underway to follow up with workshop attendees and stakeholders to review findings from the sessions and to establish next steps
<p>1.4 Ensure that the qualifications system enables providers to make appropriate provision for disengaged young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Key Stage 4 and 16 to 18 full-time courses will be included in the Electronic Common Area Prospectus by Sept 2013 • Post-16 courses to be included in the prospectus by Sept 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with local authorities and Careers Wales were held during the development of youth engagement and progression framework

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of the national Apprenticeship Matching Service, Jobs Growth Wales placements and Careers Wales supported employment vacancies by Sept 2014 	
Welsh BaccaLaureate		
2.1 Develop a revised and more rigorous Welsh BaccaLaureate qualification that reflects the relevant recommendations of the Review of Qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level model autumn 2013 • Full outline Jan 2014 • Final spec July 2014 • Teaching from Sept 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A high level model for the revised, more rigorous Welsh Bac is in the process of being approved and will be finalised in the autumn 2013 • Six working groups have begun looking at the fine detail of the qualification. These groups include key stakeholders, expert practitioners, WJEC, Welsh Bac subject experts and Welsh Government officials • A plan for promotion, support and delivery is being developed. This will ensure that practitioners have the capability and resources to deliver the revised Welsh Bac effectively at all levels
2.2 Introduce grading at Advanced level in the current model of the Welsh BaccaLaureate, to improve recognition of qualifications by UK Universities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading in place for September 2013 • First graded results from 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading is being introduced for current Advanced level to begin in September 2013. Leaflets to inform parents of the changes have been distributed to Welsh Bac centres • The WJEC have run events in schools to explain

		the changes to the teaching workforce
2.3 Ensure that practitioners have the capability and resources to deliver the revised Welsh Baccalaureate effectively at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and delivery plan agreed autumn 2013 • Welsh Bac to be key feature of wider communications strategy from Jan 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key stakeholders are closely involved in the redevelopment of the Welsh Bac qualification • Working groups established to consider resource implications
Vocational qualifications		
3.1 Implement a new gatekeeping process, including IVET/CVET classification, for vocational qualifications for offer in Wales as part of a revised approach to the approval of vocational qualifications as being eligible for funding. This approach, together with a revised quality assurance approach, will support portability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IVET and CVET definitions agreed by April 2013 • Classification plan to be in place by July 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with key stakeholders on the definition of IVET/CVET classifications has been completed • Process for undertaking and displaying classifications being finalised • Awarding organisations consulted on gatekeeping approach. Pilot models in key sectors being developed
3.2 To strengthen and refocus the regulation and quality assurance of awarding organisations in Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statements of Compliance to be submitted by Awarding Organisations by July 2013 • Essential Skills Wales improvement plans to be completed by March 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project plan to ensure compliance with Welsh Government's General Conditions of Recognition is in place • Essential Skills Wales improvement plans: a programme of visits to each awarding organisations has begun. There is regular communication with awarding organisations on the development of their improvement plans

General qualifications		
<p>4.1 Develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New GCSEs in English Language, Welsh First Language, Numeracy and Mathematical Techniques to be ready for first teaching from September 2015 • New GCSEs in additional subjects to be rolled out, on a phased basis, for first teaching between September 2016 and September 2018 • An appropriate programme of support for teachers to successfully deliver the new GCSEs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft GCSE qualification criteria and subject design principles to be developed by November 2013 • Teaching of first tranche of new GCSEs commences Sept 2015 with first award in August 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations have been made to key stakeholder conferences to explain the plans for the reform of general qualifications in Wales and to receive their comments on the proposals • Qualifications Development Strategy Group, which includes significant stakeholder representation, has been established to support these changes and has agreed a draft programme for GCSE development between 2015 and 2017/8. The development programme will be considered by Ministers in summer 2013 • Planning groups involving a range of stakeholders have been established to take forward the work on a subject by subject basis • Numeracy and Literacy Expert Panels include reformed GCSEs on their agenda. An input on GCSE development was given at recent Numeracy and Literacy Panels
<p>4.2 Work towards maintaining the same A levels as England and Northern Ireland where possible but allow variation where necessary to meet the needs of learners in Wales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final criteria for AS and A levels in Wales to be published Jan 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations were made at key stakeholder conferences and opportunities provided for stakeholders to be updated and to comment on the plans for reform of general qualifications in Wales

<p>Revise existing AS and A levels in light of Recommendation 25 and develop new AS and A levels, on a phased basis, as appropriate and in light of developments in England and Northern Ireland</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching of first tranche of new/ revised A and AS levels commences Sept 2015 with first award in August 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder engagement in the development of the next generation of AS and A levels have been agreed
<p>4.3 Ensure that regulation and quality assurance arrangements for general qualifications offered in Wales support high-quality general qualifications which are portable, comparable with the best in the world and comply with the general qualifications related recommendations of the Review of Qualifications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A project plan to develop robust regulation and quality assurance arrangements is to be agreed by Sept 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welsh Government officials are working closely with awarding organisations and other regulators to help ensure the secure delivery of summer 2013 assessments and to consider issues relating to divergence between qualifications in Wales, Northern Ireland and England
<p>Skills qualifications</p>		
<p>5.1 Ensure a new suite of Essential Skills qualifications is available for use from 2015. For Communication and Application of Number, these should have reviewed content and be a more robust, consistent and reliable assessment with a greater proportion of externality. A new qualification in digital literacy should replace ICT, with a revised assessment method. A new suite of units, replacing Wider</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised standards available to awarding organisations Oct 2013 Lessons learned and support needs identified by May 2014 Qualifications ready for delivery August 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working groups and steering groups have been established with wide stakeholder interest represented to recommend a way forward Presentations were made at stakeholder conferences and opportunities provided for stakeholders to be updated and to comment on policy development and improvement priorities identified to date Essential Skills Wales standards for Application of

<p>Key Skills, which can be built into qualifications addressing personal effectiveness, employability and enterprise. These should have revised content, structure and assessment method</p>		<p>Number and Communications have been reviewed</p>
<p>Qualifications Wales</p>		
<p>6.1 Establish Qualifications Wales as a body with regulatory and awarding powers by September 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External advisory board established by May 2013 • Consultation in September 2013 • Cabinet Paper to be submitted following the findings of the due diligence review in October 2013 • Organisational structure design to be completed by March 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualifications advisory board has been established and has held a successful first meeting which was attended by the Minister for Education and Skills • A workshop to begin to develop a regulatory/quality assurance model has been held with WJEC and Welsh Government officials • Legislative process for establishing the new organisation has started and due diligence exercise will commence in summer 2013
<p>Data and performance measurement</p>		
<p>7.1 Introduce new performance measures reflecting achievement of the Welsh Bac and make the other changes to performance measurement and reporting arrangements as set out in the recommendations of the review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for introducing new performance measures to be agreed and approved by Ministers by Sept 2013 • Welsh Bac performance measures to be used from 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A working group comprising Welsh Government Officials and Estyn has been established to look at performance data collected currently and the revisions necessary to meet the recommendations of the review • Letter to schools and other stakeholders by the

	<p>2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First reporting of new Welsh Bac performance 2017 	<p>end of summer term 2013 about performance measure changes for reporting 2016</p>
<p>7.2 Welsh Government and the careers service to ensure that high-quality, impartial and reliable information about qualification options available at 14 and 16 is readily accessible and available online. This should include progression information in relation to qualifications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales Strategic Forum for Career Development established by Sept 2013 • Key Performance Indicators for broader 'careers family' to be agreed through the Strategic Forum by March 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity mapping work contracted to Careers Wales to create an online systematic way of identifying the specifications of job criteria for a young person's consideration
<p>7.3 Improve the evidence base in relation to progression and destinations and qualifications in Wales, including use of the Unique Learner Number system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project plan to develop the way forward established by Sept 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A data-linking working group of Welsh Government officials has been established to look at post-16 data and is scoping the data requirements and policy across the Welsh Government Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
<p>7.4 Ensure that the replacement for DAQW accommodates all the outcomes of the Review of Qualifications and incorporates all qualifications and units recognised in Wales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project plan to scope the requirements of the new system to be developed when project team in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A project is being established within the DfES ICT Unit to lead on the development of a new system • Meetings with Careers Wales to discuss data and technical requirements and ensure links are made between the organisations