

**Bulletin 2****School Performance Reporting****04/10/16**

The Welsh Government updates Local Authorities and Consortia on school performance reporting issues via this bulletin. Through this channel we will be keeping you informed on decisions impacting on performance reporting policies and providing clarification on any complex issues. Please share this information with your schools as relevant. Please note that where we refer to a year, this is the reporting year, at the end of the academic year, where the cohort in question reaches the end of the stage being measured.

1 'Capped 9' announcement by the Cabinet Secretary for Education

On 30th June the Cabinet Secretary for Education announced a change to the Key Stage 4 performance measures to be introduced, and we have since communicated this change but have included again in this bulletin for ease of reference and further clarification:

The Cabinet Secretary has decided that we will no longer focus on the revised Capped Points Score, the 'Capped 9', as the headline indicator when it is introduced. Instead, it will be captured as part of the whole suite of Key Stage 4 measures, retaining the additional lens it will provide on learner attainment and aiding schools and local authorities in their self-evaluation and improvement planning.

This means that there is no one main measure to be focussed on at a school level.

A suite of measures should be used to consider schools' performance from different angles. The Capped 9 and the Level 2 inclusive/Welsh Baccalaureate measures will therefore hold similar status.

The intention behind publishing performance measures at a school level is to provide an overview of performance to help as part of a self-evaluation and school improvement system. We recognise that quantitative performance data is only a starting point when considering the performance and effectiveness of a school in achieving the best outcomes for individual learners. The Welsh Government produces many different measures broken down and presented in several ways. Which of these is used or reported on, and the sort of data or analysis needed, will depend on the questions being asked and the local context. However, as a minimum, when producing any report on performance data at a school level, the Welsh Government will include results for these

measures:

- Level 2 inclusive (Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation & National measures from 2018)
 - Level 2 threshold (2017 only)
 - Level 1 threshold (2017 only)
- Capped Points Score (the revised, 'Capped 9' measure from 2017).

We will continue to publish all of these measures alongside each other in the All Wales Core Data Sets, on My Local School and in school comparative reports including SSSPs.

Other measures or analyses to be included in any consideration of a school's performance will depend on the individual school in question and the purpose of the report.

In addition to the ongoing work on curriculum reform and accountability, feedback from a range of key stakeholders in the sector indicated that the Capped 9 measure appears to have started to narrow the curriculum choices in some schools and that decisions on the curriculum being led by the emphasis on this single measure are not always in the best interest of the individual learners. The fact that the focus of curriculum planning by schools is based on the prominence of a single measure is of particular concern when set alongside the direction that is being developed by Successful Futures. This amended approach is in line with the recommendations contained with Successful Futures and will have the positive effect of widening curriculum choice.

A copy of the Cabinet Secretary's written statement can be found here:

<http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2016-new/58393509/?lang=en>

2 Literacy and numeracy requirements in performance measures

- a) Following a review by Qualifications Wales, the WJEC has recently announced that it will accept both the new GCSE mathematics-numeracy AND GCSE mathematics as satisfying the numeracy requirements of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification awards (previously just the new GCSE mathematics-numeracy was to be accepted).

In light of this, the Welsh Government has revised the numeracy requirements of the Level 2 inclusive measure and mathematics indicator in 2017 to align with the criteria for the Welsh Baccalaureate awards (and therefore the measures that will be implemented from 2018). This will ensure a more consistent approach to performance measurement as we transition to use of Welsh Baccalaureate measures. Allowing either of the new mathematics GCSEs to count as the numeracy requirement (the best result will be taken where both qualifications are awarded to a learner) will give more closely matched definitions of these measures and render us a little more able to gauge progress across a shifting performance measurement

platform. It will provide some additional consistency across the years as we implement a number of changes to performance measures between 2016 and 2018.

This does not affect the definitions of the revised Capped Points Score (Capped 9) where there is already a component included for each of these new maths qualifications. The Capped 9 places additional importance upon the attainment of both Mathematics and Mathematics-numeracy GCSEs and two GCSEs in sciences (or equivalent qualifications in 2017).

- b)** No further changes have been made to the literacy requirements for performance measures from 2017. Only the new specification English or Welsh Language GCSEs will contribute towards specific literacy elements of performance measures from 2017.

The recommendation to emphasise English or Welsh Language rather than accept English or Welsh Literature was made by the Review of Qualifications following its wide ranging consultative process. The case for this change was set out in the Review of Qualification section 6 of the report which can be found here:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/121127reviewofqualificationsen.pdf>.

The reasoning behind the review's finding relates directly to the recommendations to reform the English and Welsh Language GCSEs. These place increased emphasis on the literacy skills of learners, building on LNF expectations. Ministers accepted these recommendations, and there are currently no plans to move from this through changes in KS4 performance measures. We are aware that concerns have been raised about schools possibly moving away from English and Welsh Literature. Schools should continue to guide learners towards those approved qualifications that best meet their needs.

Literature qualifications will not count towards the specific literacy requirements of measures from 2017 but can still count towards the non-subject specific components.

3 Other definitional changes to performance measures in 2016

a) EOTAS

The EOTAS Task and Finish group recommended that, in keeping with our inclusive approach to education in Wales and to bring a clearer focus on those learners who receive such provision of education, we now include Key Stage 4 attainment of EOTAS pupils in local authority, regional and national results. We now have a number of years' worth of robust data for EOTAS pupils. We will therefore be implementing this change from 2016, This will apply a fairer and more consistent approach across all LAs, accounting for the varying approaches towards EOTAS provision.

b) Independent schools

From 2016, performance data for independent schools will no longer be included in Wales figures for the reasons that follow.

In the past they have been included in national level data only. Prior to Key Stage 4, pupil level and assessment data from independent schools are only occasionally provided to the Welsh Government on a voluntary basis by individual schools, giving only a partial picture of attainment in this sector.

At Key Stage 4 no contextual data for independent schools are available to us for analysis. As such, without the year group data, when we move to a year 11 cohort basis for Key Stage 4 for maintained schools, we will need to continue using the age basis for results for learners in independent schools.

Many independent schools choose to deliver qualifications that are not approved/designated for delivery by our regulatory body, and therefore are not included in our measures, and these numbers may increase as we move to the single specifications for reformed qualifications approved/designated for use in Wales. This will lead to a high proportion of learners in independent schools not attaining our defined threshold measures and achieving low points scores. Without further data this will present a misleading picture of the breadth and standard of provision in this sector.

Further information and modelling on the effects of making these changes to the dataset can be found in a statistical article that was released on 21 July 2016, which consulted on these changes. The article can be found here (dated 21 July): <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/?topic=Education+and+skills&lang=en>.

4 Performance points for the Welsh Baccalaureate Core in 2016

Last year, standard points were allocated for the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification (WBQ) core element where all criteria for the complete award had been met by a learner. This was also the case at the advanced level without any differentiation to the grading of the core.

As this year is the final year, in the main, of inclusion of the legacy WBQ in performance figures, for consistency we will be retaining this approach, i.e. with no differentiation to grading within the advanced level core.

To confirm, the points that were issued for the core at each level in 2015 and that will again be issued in 2016 are:

- Advanced – 63 points
- Intermediate – 46 points
- Foundation level – 25 points

From next year onwards we have a new more rigorous WBQ with elements of the award being approved qualifications in their own right, complete with grading structure and associated, independent performance measurement contribution values. These values can be found on QiW (www.qiw.wales – the online database of all approved/designated qualifications in Wales) for each qualification, including the various Skills Challenge Certificates.

If you have any further queries regarding the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification then please email 14-19@wales.gsi.gov.uk. Queries regarding performance measures can be emailed, as usual, to ims@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

5 GCSEs and non-GCSEs

Where caps are being applied to the GCSE equivalence volume of qualifications in threshold measures from 2017, the distinction is in the qualification type, i.e. whether it is a GCSE or not. Therefore:

- Vocational GCSEs will be counted as GCSEs
- Non-GCSEs that are classed as general qualifications will be subject to the cap on non-GCSEs that can contribute
- As non-GCSEs, the Skills Challenge Certificate qualifications will be subject to the cap on non-GCSEs that can contribute.

6 Guided Learning Hour (GLH) parameters

In 2017 the parameters are changing for qualifications worth a 0.5 GCSE. This means that some qualifications currently worth 0.5 GCSEs will move to the 0.25 GCSE equivalence bracket, and some qualifications currently worth 1 GCSE will henceforth be worth a 0.5 GCSE. The table below summarises the changes.

GCSE equivalence	GLH parameters	
	2016	2017 onwards
0.25	1-44	1-59
0.5	45-89	60-119
1	90-144	120-144
2	145 upwards	145 upwards

7 Which qualifications count in Key Stage 4 performance measures?

We are frequently asked about how the following types of qualifications contribute towards Key Stage 4 performance measures.

a) Entry level qualifications

- These are below Level 1 qualifications on the Credit and Qualifications framework for Wales (CQfW)

- They will not count towards the Level 1 threshold (Welsh BaccaLaureate (Foundation) from 2018) or the Level 2 threshold measures (Welsh BaccaLaureate (National) from 2018)
- They can contribute towards the Capped Points Score measures.

b) Level 3 qualifications

- Level 3 qualifications can count towards Key Stage 4 measures providing they are approved/designated for delivery to pre-16 learners.

c) Essential Skills Wales

- From 2017 these qualifications will no longer be approved for pre-16 delivery
- From 2017 they will no longer count in Key Stage 4 performance measures.

d) Qualifications with a partial GCSE equivalence

- Qualifications that are equivalent to less than 1 GCSE in size can still contribute towards both the threshold measures (Level 2 inclusive, Level 2 and Level 1) and the Capped Points Score, and a combination can be totalled to achieve the desired overall volume.
- The WJEC has confirmed such qualifications cannot contribute towards the award of the Welsh BaccaLaureate qualifications (WBQs). More information on the award criteria for the WBQs can be found at: <http://qualificationswales.org/qualifications/welsh-baccaLaureate/?lang=en> and within the WJEC's WBQs specifications.

8 QiW - (www.qiw.wales – the online database of all approved/designated qualifications in Wales)

QiW was launched in April this year and is owned by Qualifications Wales.

It replaces the old system DAQW, in publishing details on all the approved and designated qualifications for delivery in Wales.

The Welsh Government has worked in partnership with Qualifications Wales to include associated performance measurement information for qualifications held in QiW. This database is where to check for performance information attached to qualifications in the first instance.

The 2016 performance measures data has recently been refreshed, filling in gaps and correcting some errors identified. You may now wish to check information for relevant qualifications once again.

There are some instances of older qualifications being removed from the DAQW dataset prior to transferring to QiW where they were still within their certification period. Please contact us if you are having trouble finding a qualification awarded to a learner on QiW and think it could be one of these.

We are now working on functionality for the display of contribution values for

2017 onwards, including clearer indications of how qualifications will count towards the various, changing measures in different years. This update is due to be released by November. There is no other dataset available until then. However, providing they are still approved/designated and within the certification period, qualifications will count with the same values attached **except where we have previously specified changes are being applied in 2017**. These changes are:

- Essential Skills Wales and Wider Key Skills no longer approved for pre-16 delivery; and
- Qualifications with a mean guided learning hours (GLH) value of up to & including 59 will have a 0.25 GCSE equivalence, 60 up to & including 119 GLH a 0.5 GCSE equivalence, 120 up to & including 144 GLH a 1 GCSE equivalence and all qualifications with 145 GLH or above will have a 2 GCSE equivalence (see section 6 above). Where a GCSE equivalence value will be reduced for a qualification in 2017 onwards, the points attached to grades will be reduced proportionally.

9 Target setting requirements

Below is a summary of the information set out in a letter sent by the Welsh Government last week:

a) Key Stage 2 & 3

We wrote to the sector on 21 May following a decision by the Cabinet Secretary for Education to withdraw the decision to amend expected levels for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 and therefore removing the requirement to amend the target setting regulations in order to increase the expected level of achievement for learners in English, Welsh (first language) and Mathematics at the end of Key Stages 2 and 3 from Summer 2018. i.e. Target setting requirements for Key Stages 2 and 3 will remain as they are already specified in regulation. More information on this decision can be found here: <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/160714-ks2-3-assessment-requirements-en.pdf>

b) Key Stage 4

Following the recent decision by the Cabinet Secretary for Education on the planned changes to Key Stage 4 performance measures over the coming years (see item 1), and whilst we are considering the detailed implications of the reform of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales, amendments to target setting arrangements for Key Stage 4 have been postponed.

Schools will need to continue to set prescribed targets for achievement against the Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Mathematics

(Level 2 inclusive) as well as the Level 1 Threshold. As there will be no reporting on the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) from 2017, and the leavers without qualifications figure is no longer captured, there will no longer be a requirement for schools to set these targets at Key Stage 4 as previously prescribed. Schools are however still required to also set a minimum of three local targets for Key Stage 4 that reflect the priorities identified through self evaluation, consideration of core data sets and other comparative information. These targets should reflect national priorities as they apply in relation to individual schools.

Although this is very much an interim solution, please be assured that the Welsh Government will continue to provide Level 2 inclusive and Level 1 threshold data to schools for the next few years. Data for these soon-to-be replaced measures (including the CSI) will be provided to schools and will continue to feature in All Wales Core Data Sets. We will continue to provide these data (from 2018 in addition to the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification attainment data) to provide continuity for effective self-evaluation processes and the setting of meaningful targets whilst we transition to the new measures.

Please note:

- from 2016 Key Stage 4 targets refer to Year 11 pupils (previously, Key Stage 4 targets referred to pupils who were 15 at the start of the academic year)
- there are a number of changes to the contribution values of some qualifications that apply from 2016 and 2017
- changes to the definitions of the Level 1 threshold and Level 2 inclusive are applied from 2017.

More information on these changes being applied to school performance measures can be found on our web pages here:

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/schoolshome/schooldata/using-school-information-and-reporting-on-performance/?lang=en>

10 Anomalies as we move to a year 11 cohort at Key Stage 4

As a consequence of the change to a year 11 cohort from learners aged 15 at the start of the year, we may see some anomalies over the next two years as we crossover from one basis to another. For example, during 2015 and 2016 we may see instances of:

a) Learners missed out in both years

Where a learner is taught in year group 11 in 2015 but is aged 14 (the pupil is ahead of their natural year group), this learner's results:

- will not count this year because they are not 15.

- will not count next year either because they will not be in year 11.
- will never be counted in our official statistics.

b) Learners counted in both years

Where a learner is taught in year group 10 but is aged 15 (the learner is behind their natural year group), this learner's results:

- will count in 2015 because they are 15
- will also count in 2016 because they will then be in year 11.
- will be counted in the two successive years.

These particular scenarios will only occur for the changeover year. However, from 2016 onwards, where a learner repeats year 11 their results will be counted in successive years.

To help schools, local authorities and consortia gauge the effect of the change in cohort, we will provide additional datasets via Local Authorities with key measures for 2016 calculated on the age 15 basis soon after publication of the final Key Stage 4 data in December this year.

Please email us at ims@wales.gsi.gov.uk with any further queries on school performance reporting