Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Evaluation of the Extended National Practitioners' Training Programme Pilot

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Research

Evaluation of the Extended National Practitioners' Training Programme Pilot

Audience   National and local bodies in Wales concerned with education, training and skills in Wales.

Overview   The National Practitioners' Training Programme is a pilot project that aims to create an increase in the pool of practitioners able to teach or train through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, and therefore increase the number of learning opportunities taught and assessed through the medium of Welsh in all parts of Wales, as envisaged by Iaith Pawb.

Action required   None – for information.

Further information   Any questions on the evaluation can be addressed to:
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Additional copies   This document can also be accessed from the Welsh Assembly Government website at: www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills

Related documents   None

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Evaluation of the Extended National Practitioners' Training Programme Pilot

1. Introduction

1.1 Old Bell 3, in association with Dateb, was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) to undertake an evaluation of the Extended National Practitioners' Training Programme Pilot (the NPTP). This evaluation was undertaken between August 2008 and January 2009.

1.2 In this report we:

- recall the overall aim and objectives of the evaluation (section 2);

- describe the methodology used to undertake the evaluation (section 3);

- provide some background surrounding the nptp (section 4);

- review developments which have taken place since the 2006/07 evaluation (section 5);

- present the findings of our fieldwork (section 6);

- present our conclusions about the pilot (section 7); and

- present our recommendations (section 8).

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1   The Welsh Assembly Government's specification set out clearly the aim and objectives for the evaluation.

2.2   The aim of the study was twofold:

- to *"assess the impact and effectiveness of the NPTP in increasing the number of individuals able to train or teach through the medium of Welsh or bilingually"; and*

- to *"assess the impact of NPTP on participating schools, colleges and work-based training providers in terms of their planning of Welsh-medium or Welsh-language learning opportunities".*

2.3   The objectives for the evaluation were:

- *"to assess whether the overall aims and objectives of the NPTP are being met;*

- *to assess the effectiveness of the NPTP in delivering the expected levels of fluency, specialist knowledge and confidence to teach or lecture through the medium of Welsh;*

- *to assess the impact of the NPTP in terms of immediate impact on the education and training sector, and to long term capacity building in the sector;*

- *to identify the key strengths of the NPTP and any constraints/issues that may have impeded their effectiveness; and*

- *to provide guidance on the ongoing development and improvement of the NPTP, in particular in terms of meeting the needs of the education and training sector in Wales".*

2.4   This evaluation built upon the 'interim' evaluation exercise undertaken in 2006/07, though the emphasis of this second study was firmly upon the longer term effects of the NPTP upon practitioners and upon their employing institutions/ organisations. It was not concerned in any great depth with arrangements for the management of the Programme, although in undertaking the work Old Bell 3/Dateb did consider the extent to which the recommendations made in the 2006/07 interim evaluation had been adopted.

3. Work Programme

3.1 The work was divided into five elements:

    3.2.1 Inception.

    3.2.2 Review of Developments since the Interim Evaluation.

    3.2.3 Fieldwork with Former NPTP Participants and Key Stakeholders.

    3.2.4 Analysis and Reporting.

    3.2.5 Project Management.

3.2 In the following sections, we set out the purpose of each element of the work and describe the activities undertaken.

3.3 We acknowledge the assistance received from the Welsh Language Development Unit, the two Universities involved in the delivery of the Pilot, former participants in the NPTP and their employing institutions, all of whom kindly contributed to our work.

3.2.1 Inception

The purpose of this stage was:

- to agree upon a detailed plan for undertaking the evaluation; and
- to gather any relevant background information.

This involved:

- meeting with staff involved in the management of the NPTP Pilot;
- accessing relevant documents;
- developing a project plan, including communication arrangements; and
- producing an Inception Report for agreement with the Evaluation Project Manager.

3.2.2 Review of Developments since the Interim Evaluation

The purpose of this stage was:

- to explore the extent to which recommendations made in the interim evaluation have been acted upon;
- to explore other factors which have led to changes being made to the Programme;
- to provide a brief background to the NPTP;
- to provide a brief description of the nature and structure of the training provided under the NPTP; and

- to provide an up-to-date analysis of NPTP participants by sector and gender.

This involved:

- analysing documents received from the WLDU, including participant applications[1], post course review reports[2] and Project Steering Group papers;
- meeting with the former NPTP manager to discuss developments since the last evaluation;
- meeting with representatives from Bangor and Cardiff Universities to discuss their approaches to the delivery of the NPTP and the nature of the practitioners recruited onto courses; and
- drafting Chapters 4 and 5 of this report.

3.2.3   Fieldwork with Former NPTP Participants and Key Stakeholders

The purpose of this stage was:

- to explore former participants' views on the strengths and weaknesses of the NPTP and the factors which helped or hindered their participation;
- to explore former NPTP participants' perceptions of:
  - their Welsh language skills levels, before participating and immediately after the course, as well as at the time of the research;
  - their confidence in using Welsh in a professional context before participating and immediately after the course, as well as at the time of the research;
  - their bilingual pedagogical skills;
- to explore the extent to which former participants:
  - teach/train through the medium of Welsh;
  - use Welsh for other professional purposes;
  - continue to develop bilingual/Welsh medium resources after completing the NPTP;
  - continue to develop their Welsh language skills further after completing the NPTP;
- to explore the effects of participation upon practitioners' employing organisations in terms of their approaches to Welsh medium/bilingual education/training and the volume of Welsh medium provision delivered;
- to explore how learning organisations believe the NPTP and Sabbaticals Scheme should develop over the next few years; and
- to derive data about participation in Welsh medium/bilingual learning.

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[1] We were unable to access application forms for 14 practitioners who participated in two courses, run from September 2007 and January 2008. All of these individuals worked in schools.
[2] We were able to review the post course reports of 77 former participants.

This involved:

- developing an on-line questionnaire to administer to relevant practitioners;

- surveying practitioners who had participated in NPTP courses between January 2006 and March 2008[3] using the electronic questionnaire. An e-mail inviting former participants to complete the on-line questionnaire was issued on 4 October and followed up by two e-mail reminders a fortnight and three weeks later. We also telephoned former participants three weeks after the original e-mail to verify receipt, to obtain an alternative e-mail address (if appropriate) and to remind individuals to complete the questionnaire, had they not already done so. Fifty-two out of a possible 97 former participants responded to our survey, giving a response rate of some 54%;

- analysing the survey data;

- developing research instruments to guide semi-structured interviews with former participants and senior staff from their employing organisations;

- undertaking interviews with 18 former participants working at schools, colleges and work based learning settings to explore further issues raised by the survey of participants. 16 of these interviews were undertaken face to face and two over the telephone;

- undertaking interviews with the line managers of 12 former participants to explore their views of the effects of the NPTP upon former Programme participants in their employ and more widely upon their organisations. Two of these interviews were undertaken over the telephone;

- attending a conference entitled *"Making the Most of the National Sabbatical Scheme"* organised by Sgiliaith;

- synthesising the findings of the survey and subsequent fieldwork; and

- drafting Chapter 6 of this report.

3.2.4   Analysis and Reporting

The purpose of this stage was to:

- produce a comprehensible, justifiable and readable report; and

- to agree upon our Final Report with the Project Manager and WLDU staff.

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[3] Participants in the April 2008 courses were not surveyed because they were unlikely to have had time to implement what they had learnt, given that the survey was undertaken during the first half of the term immediately after their participation. September 2008 participants were still on the course and were not, therefore, surveyed.

This involved:

- preparing a Draft Report;

- discussing our emerging findings with the Programme Manager and receiving written feedback from representatives of Bangor and Cardiff Universities; and

- revising the Draft Report and agreeing this Final Report.

4. Background to the Evaluation

4.1 Background to the NPTP

4.1.1 The National Practitioners' Training Programme and the accompanying Sabbaticals Scheme (the Programme) was established in 2005 to help increase the supply of practitioners able to teach and train through the medium of Welsh across the range of pre and post 16 learning. The intention was to enable the development and piloting of immersion training in Welsh-language skills and Welsh-medium/bilingual teaching/training methodologies for practitioners over a three year period. Following an encouraging initial evaluation in 2006/07, the pilot project was extended for a further two years, to allow time for its longer term effects to become fully apparent. The pilot has since been extended until August 2010 so that any successor intervention can be built into the Welsh Assembly Government's Welsh Medium Education Strategy, which is currently under development.

4.1.2 The Programme is aimed at people who speak Welsh reasonably fluently, but who lack the confidence, technical vocabulary or grammatical skills to teach their specialist subjects through the medium of Welsh. It was initially confined to practitioners from schools, Further Education (FE) colleges and Work Based Learning (WBL) providers, but eligibility was opened up to supply teachers and Local Education Authority (LEA) staff following the 2007 evaluation and to lecturers in the Higher Education (HE) sector from September 2008.

4.1.3 Bangor University was selected to lead the development and delivery of the NPTP on the basis of its unparalleled expertise in the teaching of Welsh (including immersion programmes), in Welsh medium/bilingual pedagogy and in developing Welsh medium learning resources. Bangor University is partnered in the delivery of the Programme by Cardiff University.

4.1.4 The Programme is delivered in blocks of three months. Most participants have taken sabbatical leave from their employing institutions to attend courses at one or other University, although a distance learning option was introduced in 2007 to enable practitioners to take less time off work. Distance learning courses enable practitioners to combine participation in the Programme with some normal work/teaching responsibilities and are aimed at entrants with reasonably strong Welsh-language skill levels.

4.1.5 Courses address four main themes:

- Various aspects of **Welsh grammar** e.g. parts of speech/lexical classes, mutations, conjugations, declensions and commonly made mistakes.
- The application of **linguistic skills** including:
  - reading and writing Welsh at progressively higher levels;
  - the principles of formal/written and informal/spoken Welsh;
  - précising Welsh text;

- o translating into Welsh; and
- o 'trans-languaging'[4].

- '**Micro teaching'**, including:
  - o observing Welsh medium delivery at schools/colleges;
  - o the preparation of lessons and materials for use in teaching/training situations; and
  - o the simulated delivery of sample lessons.

- The **use of Welsh for administrative purposes** e.g. report writing, speaking or writing to parents, union work, filling in forms etc.

4.1.6   Participants are introduced to and provided with a range of resources upon joining the course, including:

- personal lap-top computers (which they borrow for the duration of the course);

- access to the relevant university's Virtual Learning Environment and library facilities;

- **Cysgliad**, a computer based Welsh language spelling and grammar checker and Welsh – English – Welsh dictionary;

- **Cymarfer**, an online resource designed to improve the language skills of those who already speak, read and write Welsh reasonably well;

- **Y Termiadur**, computer based standardised index of education related terminology; and

- a range of paper based resources such as dictionaries and grammar guides.

4.1.7   Participants are given free copies of Cysgliad and Y Termiadur upon completing the course, as well as paper based resources such as Llawlyfr Gloywi Iaith[5].

4.1.8   Assessment takes place at three points during the course:

- at the beginning, when participants are asked to make two short verbal presentations, to write two 400 word pieces and to undertake a reading, comprehension and vocabulary test;

- during weeks 5, 7 and 10 of the course, when participants have three opportunities to deliver 'micro lessons' lasting 20, 25 and 30 minutes respectively. Assessment is made in terms of lesson plan, work plan, the resources used, verbal presentation and a personal reflection paper; and

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[4] This the term used to describe conveying the meaning of text presented in one language in another language without translating literally or sticking slavishly to the original i.e. translating idiomatically whilst also contextualising or précising.
[5] Canolfan Bedwyr (2008) Llawlyfr Gloywi Iaith, Bangor University.

- a final assessment during weeks 10 and 11 of the course which involves précising text, translanguaging text, converting English text into idiomatic Welsh and a personal course evaluation.

4.1.9   The content of the NPTP has evolved as lessons have been learnt from the delivery of each course.

4.2   Programme Aims and Objectives

4.2.1   The longer term aim of the Programme is to extend the pool of practitioners able to teach or train through the medium of Welsh or bilingually in order to increase the opportunities available to individuals to learn and be assessed through the medium of Welsh.

4.2.2   The objectives of the Programme were paraphrased as follows in the initial evaluation report:

- to strengthen the Welsh-language skills of practitioners up to the amended Level 4 of the Welsh for Adults (WfA) framework;

- to develop the pedagogical skills required by practitioners to teach through the medium of Welsh or bilingually;

- to increase practitioners' confidence to the extent that they will be able and willing to lecture, teach or train through the medium of Welsh; and

- to ensure that skills developed on the Programme will be used in places of employment.

4.3   Programme Targets and Budgets

4.3.1   The 2007 Evaluation Report set out a number of programme development and practitioner participation targets which were agreed for the Programme during its initial three year pilot period. The contract extension issued by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2007 required the universities involved in the Programme's delivery to put on a further ten full time and two distance learning courses, one each term in north Wales and one each term in the south. It was expected that a minimum of eight and a maximum of twelve practitioners would be recruited onto each of these courses, 85% of whom it was expected would complete the course successfully.

4.3.2   The contract extension also required the universities to:

- develop *"high quality resources to support the programme"* and *"for future training of Welsh-medium and bilingual practitioners"; and*

- *"oversee the development by participants on the course of specialised lists of terminology (concise vocabularies) in Welsh relevant to their needs and the development of materials and resources for as many subject and sector specialist areas as appropriate for the participants' needs".*

4.3.3   A budget of £3,439,762 was set for the pilot Programme when it was originally launched in 2005 and a further £3m was allocated in 2007 to enable the pilot to be extended until 2009. Expenditure fell substantially short of budget in the Programme's early days, but came much closer to expectations as more realistic budgets were set in light of experience and the Programme gathered momentum.

4.4   Programme Delivery

4.4.1   Thus far, 135 people have enrolled onto the Programme and table 4.2 below shows the breakdown of participants according to the sub-sector in which they work and the date upon which they joined the Programme. The bulk of participants have come from the primary (50%) and FE (27%) sectors, with demand from secondary schools (16%) and WBL providers (1%) far weaker. LEA staff and supply teachers became eligible for the Programme from September 2007 and represented just over 3% of participants, whilst practitioners from the HE sector, who became eligible from September 2008 represented just over 1% of all participants.

Table 4.2: Programme Participants by Sector and Start Date

Course Start Date	P	S	LEA/Supply	FE	WBL	HE	Total
January 2006	1	1		7			9
April 2006	6	2		5			13
September 2006	4	1		5			10
January 2007	10	4		6	1		21
April 2007	10	5		4			19
September 2007	9	1	2	2			14
January 2008	8	2	1	2			13
April 2008	10	4		2			16
September 2008	10	1	2	4	1	2	20
Total	68	21	5	37	2	2	135

4.4.2   Women made up almost 70% of all participants in the Programme, and 77% of those worked in the primary sector. Men represented 30% of all participants, but proportionately more (41%) of those were drawn from the FE sector.

4.4.3   Table 4.3 below shows that overall, 39% of participants opted to attend courses at Bangor University and 61% at Cardiff University. Of the 52 participants who attended Bangor University, 19 participated in distance learning courses and were drawn from as far a field as Pembrokeshire, Cardiff and Wrexham.

Table 4.3: Programme Participants by Delivering University and Start Date

Course Start Date	Number of Participants		
	Bangor	**Cardiff**	**Total**
January 2006	5	4	9
April 2006	4	9	13
September 2006	3	7	10
January 2007	12	9	21
April 2007	7	12	19
September 2007	5	9	14
January 2008	4	9	13
April 2008	5	11	16
September 2008	7	13	20
Total	52	83	135

5.   Extent to which Recommendations made in the last Evaluation have been implemented

5.1   The 2007 Evaluation Report concluded by making 22 recommendations. Twenty one of the recommendations made were predicated upon a view that the pilot Programme should be extended for a period of 24 months beyond its planned end date in July 2007, not least to allow sufficient time to pass to enable judgements to be made about its longer term effects. This recommendation was accepted and the pilot Programme was extended, initially until August 2009 and subsequently until August 2010.

5.2   In the table shown below, we examine the extent to which the remaining 21[6] recommendations have been addressed.

No.	Recommendation	Extent to which addressed
1	DELLS should plan the nature of courses to be delivered during the 2007/08 and 2008/09 academic years (i.e. whether full time or part-time, the target audience for these courses, centre based or distance learning), the dates of delivery and the location of delivery – whilst retaining some flexibility.	The Contract Variation issued by DCELLS in July 2007 provided a schedule of courses to be delivered. Specific references were made to the delivery of six courses each at Bangor and Cardiff and to the delivery of one distance learning course per year. The flexibility within the contract allowed one of Bangor's centre based courses to be replaced by an additional distant learning course during 2008/9. No specific reference was made to the nature of practitioners to be targeted, although the Steering Group and DCELLS accepted that eligibility for the Programme should be opened up to supply teachers[7] and HE lecturers[8].
2	Consideration should be given to 'piloting' one full time course in south west Wales.	DCELLS held discussions with Aberystwyth University in the wake of the 2007 evaluation, with a view to commissioning the University to deliver NPTP courses which would be accessible to practitioners from Ceredigion, the northern and western fringes of Carmarthenshire, Powys and south Gwynedd. Aberystwyth University, like Bangor

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[6] One of these contingent recommendations was essentially a reiteration of another and we discuss these two recommendations as one in this report, thus reducing the number of contingent recommendations considered to 20.
[7] Minutes of the Steering Group Meeting, February 2007.
[8] See Adroddiad Cynnydd y Cynllun Sabothol (13 Tach 07 – 13 Mawrth 08).

No.	Recommendation	Extent to which addressed
		and Cardiff Universities, was host to one of the newly established WfA Centres and whilst it was thought that it would be "*dangerous"* to associate the NPTP and WfA *"brands"* too closely, it was recognised that WfA Centres could provide a useful vehicle for disseminating information about the NPTP to potential applicants. In the event, however, cuts to the Programme budget for 2007/08, meant that DCELLS was not in a position to support the introduction of the Programme at a third location. Nevertheless, participants in the Sgiliaith conference claimed that there remains a significant level of latent demand for a locally delivered NPTP course in the south west region.
3	Efforts should be made to recruit practitioners of similar skill levels onto the same courses and to avoiding mixing people of different abilities wherever possible.	This recommendation was not thought practical, given the numbers of practitioners applying to participate in the Programme. Furthermore, some degree of variation in linguistic proficiency within groups was seen as something constructive rather than a hindrance – *"everyone has problems, but just different ones".*
4	Continue to promote the programme through a planned programme of press-releases, advertorials and advertisements in the professional and regional media (principally newspapers).	In November 2007 DCELLS presented the Steering Group with a Marketing Strategy, which led to the following activities being undertaken over the following year or so: • Sending information and related materials to schools, colleges, learning providers and other stakeholders –backed up with a Ministerial letter in some instances (April 2007, March 2008 and September 2008).

No.	Recommendation	Extent to which addressed
		• Advertising campaigns in the regional and professional press (April 2007, March 2008 and September 2008).
		• Developing 'case studies' for use in various media.
		• Issuing regular features in stakeholder organisations' newsletters and web-sites e.g. DCELLS, Dysg[9], LLUK[10], UCAC[11], WCVA[12] and local government.
		• Giving presentations on the Programme to various stakeholder organisations e.g. the NUT[13], the Local Authorities' Language Officers Network, the FE Language Coordinators Network.
		• Organising an event at the National Eisteddfod.
		• Seconding two former participants to act as 'Champions' for the Programme by attending staff development sessions/InSET days at various institutions and by spreading the word among Local Authority Language Officers. It had been concluded that this approach was not particularly effective and alternative arrangements have now been put in place, whereby two university 'associates' have been retained to champion the NPTP, working to a programme of visits organised by WAG staff. This chimes far more closely with the detail of a recommendation in the 2007 Evaluation report[14],

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[9] The former Learning and Skills Development Agency for Wales.
[10] Lifelong Learning UK, the Sector Skills Council for the learning sector.
[11] The Teaching Union of Wales.
[12] The Wales Council for Voluntary Action.
[13] National Union of Teachers.
[14] Item 8.13.

No.	Recommendation	Extent to which addressed
		which was based on the success which project staff had in engaging potential participants in the NPTP's early days.
		• Organising a presentation on the NPTP to recipients of the Welsh Medium Incentive Supplement at Bangor University.
		• Contacting individuals who previously expressed an interest in the Programme but did not, for whatever reason, participate.
5	Institutions should be encouraged to build the Programme into their staff development plans.	The application form has, since the Programme's inception, required applicants' line managers to set out how they propose to encourage participants to *"use and develop the skills mastered on the course in the future"*.
6	Institutions should be encouraged to make a commitment to enabling participants to use their newly acquired skills upon their return to the workplace.	Following the initial evaluation, the application form was altered slightly in that line managers are now asked to commit to: • Using the skills acquired by participants in institutions' future development. • Providing WAG with a report on how the skills developed are utilised. Despite this additional requirement, it was conceded that some line managers remain more detailed than others in their descriptions of how the skills acquired will be used. Furthermore, there was no evidence that line managers are providing WAG with an account of how participants' skills are being used.
7	Participants' progress and use of skills should be tracked as part of the Programme monitoring.	This has not happened as part of the Programme's ongoing monitoring, primarily because there is not the

No.	Recommendation	Extent to which addressed
		resource within the Programme budget to do so. However, this Evaluation seeks to cast some light on this issue.
8	Practitioners and their line managers should also be asked to identify and commit to three full days or six half days during the term following participation to return to the relevant university.	No formal arrangements have been put in place to tie individuals or their line managers into capitalising upon post course support e.g. by requiring a commitment to be made at the application stage. However, it was claimed that as a result of a concerted effort on the part of the universities concerned, *"considerably more [participants] take advantage"* of the opportunity now. Some 57% of respondents to our survey of participants (see Chapter 6) had returned for at least some post course support. Some former participants had chosen alternative ways of developing their language and/or pedagogical skills further, including: • Using the time set aside to observe Welsh medium/bilingual teaching practice at other institutions. • Undertaking Welsh language related training.
9	Consideration should be given to opening eligibility for the Programme to supply teachers and early years teachers.	The Programme has been opened up to supply teachers and to practitioners from the Higher Education sector[15]. However, the Steering Group concluded that the Programme should not be opened up to Classroom Assistants within the Early Years sector[16]. Participating supply teachers are paid a 'bursary' of £77.50 a day whilst on the course. Whilst this

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[15] Associated costs e.g. 'supply' cover and travel in respect of this group are met by Mantais.
[16] Minutes of Steering Group Meeting, 20 February 2007.

No.	Recommendation	Extent to which addressed
		"provides them with the security of some pay" whilst on the course, it is not as much as they would be paid if they were actually undertaking supply work. This means that some supply teachers, even if they want to participate, might be put off by securing regular supply work.

To a degree, eligibility was opened up to HE practitioners in order to make up numbers on undersubscribed courses, although at this stage, HE practitioners have only been able to participate in distance learning courses. |
10	In the longer term, a shared database of Programme 'alumni' should be established.	This has not happened, primarily because neither WAG nor the universities concerned had sufficient staff to enable them to take on responsibility for developing and maintaining such a database. Having said that, however, the universities have indicated their willingness to develop a database of alumni, should the resource required be made available.
11	Consideration should be given to issuing a periodic 'newsletter' highlighting developments in Welsh medium/bilingual teaching and opportunities for 'alumni' to get involved in driving forward the bilingual agenda.	This recommendation has not been taken forward, again because neither WAG not the universities have the resources necessary to take on the work, albeit that the universities would be willing to do so, given the right level of resource.
12	Examples of good practice should be documented and distributed to target institutions as a means of promoting the Programme.	Working Word PR, which was commissioned to undertake wider public relations activities by DCELLS, have come up with a handful of 'case-studies' centred on former participants *selected for positive reasons".* However, this work was, in reality, designed to promote DCELLS' work rather than to transfer best practice among former NPTP participants. The resources have not been available to

No.	Recommendation	Extent to which addressed
		WAG or the universities to produce more case-study material, though the universities have indicated that they would be willing to do so were the resources made available.
13	The volume of Welsh medium/bilingual learning being delivered within the post-16 sector should be monitored over time.	This recommendation has not been taken forward, largely because the data captured on the LLWR system in this respect have not hitherto been sufficiently reliable. DCELLS' Quality Division has recently commissioned research into *"Capturing Data on Welsh and Bilingual Provision in FE Colleges"* which will seek to establish a system for capturing data relating to units of qualifications delivered through the medium of Welsh or bilingually. It is hoped that providers within the FE sector will be better able to provide reliable data in the wake of this work.
14	Consideration of formal accreditation could be pursued further.	This recommendation was not particularly well received at the time of the last evaluation and it has not hitherto been taken any further. However, DCELLS remains keen to see the course accredited as part of a wider programme of continuous professional development. On this basis DCELLS is minded to include a clause the 2009/10 NPTP contract requiring Bangor University to revisit the possibility of accrediting the course.
15	The Welsh Language Board should seek to promote the advantages offered by the Programme in its discussions with LEAs and institutions.	The Welsh Language Board included literature about the Programme in packs issued to practitioners participating in training relating to the Immersion and Intensive Language Teaching Pilots Project. The Welsh Language Board also provided the Programme Team with contact details for Immersion Pilot Coordinators.

No.	Recommendation	Extent to which addressed
16	Consideration should also be given to requiring learning providers of all kinds to set targets for the proportion of staff able to work through the medium of Welsh.	This recommendation has not been taken forward.
17	Participants should be required to discuss and agree with their line managers the resources which they will aim to develop prior to joining the Programme.	This recommendation has not been taken forward.
18	There may be some scope for posting resources prepared by participants onto a Programme web-site and allowing participants and former participants access to such materials.	This recommendation has not been taken forward, partly because neither WAG nor the universities have the capacity to develop and maintain a web-site. The universities were also concerned not to breach copyright by posting resources adapted form English medium materials on a web-site.
19	Participants should be asked to register their interest in working with others to develop Welsh medium/ bilingual learning materials at the end of their courses.	No formal arrangements have been put in place to enable this to happen, although former participants are invited, alongside other FE practitioners, to register their interest in contributing to Sgiliaith run Resource Panels.
20	Consideration should be given to tailoring the level of methodology teaching included on courses to reflect individual participants' previous experience of bilingual teaching and the availability of Sgiliaith's teaching methodology training to FE providers.	This recommendation has not been taken forward.

6. Findings of our Fieldwork

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1   In this chapter we present the findings of our fieldwork. It is informed by:

- a web-based survey of 97 practitioners who participated in the Programme between January 2006 and March 2008[17]. The survey was undertaken over a four week period during October and November 2008;
- one to one discussions with 18 former participants in the NPTP;
- one to one discussions with the line managers of 12 former participants; and
- face to face discussions with representatives of both Bangor and Cardiff universities.

6.1.2   Fifty-two practitioners responded to our survey, which represented some 54% of the former NPTP participants surveyed[18]. Table 6.1 below gives the distribution of participants, of survey respondents and of interviewees across the sectors in which they worked. It shows that practitioners within the primary sector were slightly under-represented within our sample and that practitioners working in the Further Education were slightly over-represented.

6.1.3   The relatively small numbers of secondary school teachers who have participated in the NPTP thus far means that a degree of caution needs to be exercised in interpreting survey data in respect of this group. This is even more true of Work Based Learning practitioners, LEA staff and supply teachers, who together make up only 4% of all former participants.

Table 6.1: Proportion of participants and respondents working in each sector

	% Population	% Survey Sample Achieved	% Qualitative Interviewees
Primary	50%	42%	39%
Secondary	16%	12%	22%
LEA Staff & Supply Teachers	3%	6%	-
Further Education	27%	38%	33%
Work Based Learning	1%	2%	6%
Higher Education	1%	-	-

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[17] An e-mail inviting former participants to complete an on-line questionnaire was issued on 4 October and followed up by two e-mail reminders a fortnight and three weeks later. We also telephoned former participants three weeks after the original e-mail to verify receipt, to obtain an alternative e-mail (if appropriate) and to remind individuals to complete the questionnaire, had they not already done so.
[18] Participants in the April 2008 were not surveyed because they were unlikely to have had time to implement what they had learnt, given that the survey was undertaken during the first half of the term immediately after their participation. Participants who started in September 2008 were still on the course and were not, therefore, surveyed.

6.1.4   Table 6.2 below shows that respondents to our survey were broadly representative of the proportions of participants who had undertaken courses at each of the universities involved in the Programme's delivery.

Table 6.2: Proportion of participants and respondents who attended each University

	% Population	% Sample Achieved	% Qualitative Interviewees
Bangor University	39%	44%	50%
Cardiff University	61%	56%	50%

6.1.5   Finally, Table 6.3 shows that the sample achieved in our survey was broadly representative of the time which had elapsed since participants undertook the training, albeit that participants in April 2006 courses were slightly under-represented, whilst participants in January 2006 and April 2007 courses were slightly over-represented.

Table 6.3: Proportion of participants and respondents who participated in each period

	% Population[19]	% Sample Achieved	% Qualitative Interviewees[20]
January 2006	9%	13%	6%
April 2006	13%	6%	17%
September 2006	10%	8%	11%
January 2007	21%	19%	17%
April 2007	19%	23%	17%
September 2007	14%	15%	17%
January 2008	13%	15%	17%

6.1.6   We present our findings in terms of:

- the use made of Welsh by practitioners before participating in the NPTP (section 6.2);
- participants' motivation in getting involved in the NPTP (section 6.3);
- participants' views of the NPTP (section 6.4);
- post course support (section 6.5); and
- the use made of Welsh following participation in the NPTP and the effects of participation at the institutional level (section 6.6).

[19] There is a rounding error of 1%.
[20] There is a rounding error of 2%.

6.2   Use of Welsh before participating

6.2.1   In this section we examine the extent to which practitioners used Welsh in their professional lives before participating in the NPTP. In essence, this section provides the baseline against which changes in former NPTP participants' working practices can be assessed.

6.2.2   Figure 6.1 below shows the degree to which respondents to our survey of practitioners reported that they had used Welsh for various purposes prior to participating in the NPTP. It shows that most respondents used Welsh at least some of the time to communicate with pupils and colleagues, whilst only a minority did so to communicate with pupils' parents or for administrative purposes.

Figure 6.1: Extent to which Respondents used Welsh for Different Purposes Prior to Participation in the NPTP
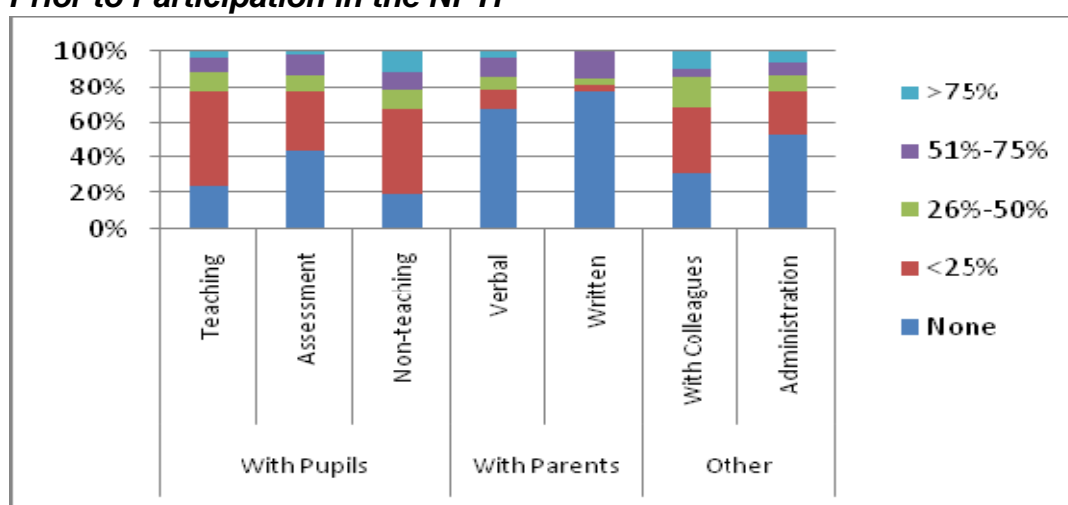
6.2.3   Our survey also explored the degree of confidence which former participants felt in using the Welsh language for various purposes. Figure 6.2 below shows the proportion of respondents to our survey claiming to have felt very or quite confident as well as those claiming to have felt quite or very insecure.

Figure 6.2: Respondents' Confidence in Using Welsh Prior to Participation
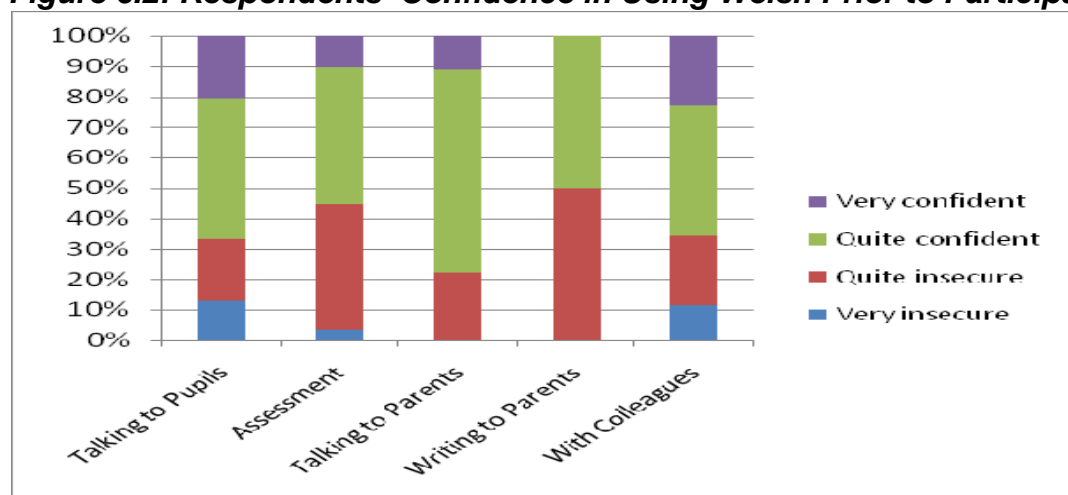
The Use of Welsh for Teaching

6.2.4   The majority (75%) of respondents to our survey claimed that they made at least some use of Welsh for teaching purposes before participating in the NPTP, but only a small proportion (12%) did so most of the time (i.e. for more than half their teaching). A greater proportion of respondents from the primary and further education sectors claimed either to make no use of Welsh in the classroom or to use it for less than a quarter of their teaching (at 86% and 85% respectively), whereas a third (33%) of respondents from secondary schools claimed to use Welsh for more than half of their teaching.

6.2.5   This pattern was also largely borne out in the qualitative interviews we undertook with former participants. The use of Welsh prior to the course ranged from *"nearly no use"* by one FE lecturer through to daily use by a subject teacher working in a bilingual secondary school.

6.2.6   The reasons most commonly given by practitioners for not using Welsh in the classroom were[21]:

- their own lack of confidence (77%);
- their pupils did not speak/understand Welsh (46%); and
- it was not customary to use Welsh in the classroom (39%).

6.2.7   It is notable that participants in the two distance learning courses run by Bangor University[22] were no more likely to have made use of Welsh for teaching purposes prior to participation in the NPTP than participants in full time courses, despite the bar being set slightly higher in terms of prior experience of the Welsh language for those wishing to participate in distance learning courses.

6.2.8   Just over 20% of respondents claimed that they were very confident in speaking Welsh to learners, both for teaching and more informal purposes and a further 46% said that they were quite confident. By contrast, just over 20% of respondents said that they were quite insecure about speaking Welsh to learners and a further 13% said that they were very insecure. Respondents from the WBL and FE sectors were seemingly more confident in speaking Welsh to learners than respondents from the primary and secondary sectors.

6.2.9   It did not necessarily follow that those respondents who claimed to make the greatest use of Welsh in the classroom were the most confident, as 56% of those who used Welsh for less than a quarter of their teaching claimed to be either quite or very confident. Having said this however, the overwhelming majority of the respondents who used Welsh in the classroom for more than a quarter of the time (92%) claimed to be either quite or very confident in their use of Welsh.

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[21] Respondents were able to identify more than one reason.
[22] January and September 2007.

The Use of Welsh to Assess Pupils/Learners

6.2.10   Just over a half (56%) of survey respondents claimed to undertake some pupil/assessment work through the medium of Welsh, though the majority of these claimed to do so less than a quarter of the time. Respondents working in the primary and further education sectors were the least likely to undertake any assessment through the medium of Welsh (at 50% each), whilst a third of respondents from the secondary sector claimed to undertake more than half of their assessment work through the medium of Welsh.

6.2.11   There was a high degree of correlation between the use made of Welsh for teaching and for assessment purposes.

6.2.12   Just over 10% of respondents claimed that they were very confident in using Welsh for assessment purposes and a further 45% said that they were quite confident. Just over 41% of respondents said that they were quite insecure and a further 3% said that they were very insecure in doing so. Respondents working in primary settings were the least likely to feel confident in assessing pupils through the medium of Welsh. As would be expected, respondents who made the most use of Welsh in assessing learners tended to be most confident, with 100% of those who said that they undertook more than half their assessment work through the medium of Welsh claiming that they were quite or very confident in doing so. It is notable that 60% of those who undertook between a quarter and a half of their assessment work in Welsh stated that they were quite or very insecure in doing so prior to participation in the NPTP.

The Use of Welsh to Communicate with Pupils/Learners outside Lessons

6.2.13   The majority (80%) of respondents to our survey claimed that they made at least some use of Welsh in communicating with pupils outside the classroom prior to participating in the NPTP, albeit that most (60%) of these did so less than a quarter of the time. Respondents from the secondary sector were much more likely (at 67%) to have used Welsh for most of their communication with pupils/learners outside the classroom, whilst respondents from the FE and primary sectors (at 25% and 23% respectively) were most likely not to have used any Welsh at all.

6.2.14   Whilst there was a close correlation between the two, a slightly greater proportion of survey respondents claimed to have used Welsh to communicate with pupils outside the classroom than claimed to have done so for teaching or assessment purposes. Furthermore, respondents claimed to have used more Welsh outside lessons, with 21% claiming to have used the language most of the time outside lessons, compared to 12% claiming to have done so for teaching purposes. This may have reflected a willingness among respondents to use the language in less testing circumstances, but a fear of doing so for more formal purposes.

6.2.15   The findings of our qualitative interviews also revealed that practitioners were, in the main, happy to hold informal discussions and conversations in Welsh, but were less confident to use the language for formal purposes such as teaching or to undertake written work. Some had previously been involved in planning lessons in Welsh but were not altogether confident in doing so. Comments made by interviewees included:

- *"I was confident on a verbal basis but it was my written Welsh that I was looking to improve by going on the course."* [Primary teacher]

- *"I decided to go on the course because I felt that my understanding of and confidence in using the language needed to be improved."* [Primary School Head]

The Use of Welsh to Communicate with Parents

6.2.16   We asked practitioners working in primary and secondary schools whether they used Welsh to communicate with pupils' parents (both verbally and in writing) prior to participating in the NPTP. This question was not asked of practitioners working in post 16 settings.

6.2.17   The majority of respondents (68%) claimed that they made no use of Welsh in communicating with pupils' parents, primarily because pupils' parents were not themselves Welsh speakers. Secondary school teachers were more likely to say that they did communicate in Welsh with at least some parents prior to their participation in the NPTP.

6.2.18   We also asked practitioners working in primary and secondary schools how confident they felt in using Welsh to communicate with pupils' parents prior to participating in the NPTP.

6.2.19   Of the 32% of respondents who used Welsh to communicate verbally with pupils' parents 11% said that they were very confident and 67% said that they were quite confident. The 22% who claimed to be fairly insecure all worked in primary schools. Confidence levels generally followed usage levels with those who made the greatest use of Welsh when speaking with parents also being the most confident in doing so.

6.2.20   Of the 25% of respondents who said that they made use of Welsh in writing to parents 50% claimed to be quite confident and the other 50% claimed to be quite insecure in doing so across both the primary and secondary sectors.

The Use of Welsh to Communicate with Colleagues

6.2.21   The majority (69%) of respondents claimed to have made some use of Welsh to communicate with colleagues, but only a small proportion (13%) did so most of the time. Respondents from the secondary sector were the most likely to have used Welsh with colleagues, whilst those from the primary sector were least likely to have done so.

6.2.22   The reasons most commonly given by respondents for not using Welsh with colleagues were[23]:

- they did not have the confidence to speak in Welsh to colleagues (44%);

- none of their colleagues spoke Welsh (44%); and

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[23] Respondents were able to identify more than one reason.

- it was not customary to use Welsh, even with Welsh speaking colleagues (25%).

6.2.23   Some 23% of respondents who said that they used Welsh to communicate with colleagues prior to participation in the NPTP felt very confident in doing so, whilst a further 43% felt quite confident. By contrast, 23% felt quite insecure and 11% felt very insecure in doing so.

The Use of Welsh for Administrative Purposes

6.2.24   Just under half of respondents (46%) made use of Welsh in their administrative work, although only a small proportion (14%) did most of their administrative work in Welsh. Respondents from the secondary sector were again most likely to have used Welsh in undertaking administrative work, whilst respondents in the primary and FE sectors were least likely to have done so.

The Use of Welsh for Extra-curricular Activities

6.2.25   We asked practitioners working in primary and secondary schools whether they were involved in running Welsh medium extra-curricular activities at school prior to participating in the NPTP. This question was not asked of practitioners working in post 16 settings.

6.2.26   Just over half (54%) of respondents said that they had been involved in some form of Welsh medium extra-curricular activities although this proportion was much higher (at 83%) in the secondary sector than the primary sector (at 46%). The majority (67%) of secondary sector respondents were involved in at least one hour of Welsh medium extra-curricular activities per week.

6.2.27   The Welsh medium extra-curricular activities most commonly identified by respondents were:

- Urdd (33%);
- other cultural activities excluding Urdd (27%);
- sports (27%); and
- other (cited by 33%), e.g. an additional GSCE course, Duke of Edinburgh and 'Gwerin y Coed'.

The Use of Welsh Medium or Bilingual Teaching and Learning Materials

6.2.28   Some 71% of respondents to our survey said that they used at least some Welsh medium or bilingual teaching/learning materials prior to participating in the NPTP, though this proportion rose to 83% among respondents working in secondary schools. For the majority of these practitioners (75%), however, Welsh medium/ bilingual materials represented less than a quarter of all the resources they used. With a few exceptions, the 'volume' of Welsh medium or bilingual teaching/learning resources that respondents used correlated to the 'volume' of teaching which they did through the medium of Welsh.

6.2.29 The majority (76%) of respondents who had used Welsh or bilingual teaching/learning materials had developed at least some of these resources themselves. Again respondents working in the secondary sector were much more likely to have developed Welsh medium materials of their own (at 100%) than respondents in primary and FE sectors (where only 73% and 62% respectively had done so).

6.3   Motivation for Participating

6.3.1   During the qualitative interviews we asked former participants and their line managers about their initial motivations for getting involved with the NPTP. In the main, the motivations of individuals tied in well with the aims of their employing institutions. Comments made included:

From an individual perspective:

- *"I suppose it was a personal confidence thing. I've been assigned as the foundation phase co-ordinator in the school and I felt a responsibility to improve my Welsh. I was also keen to arrange activities with a neighbouring Welsh medium primary school."* [Primary school teacher]

- *"It was all about confidence for me. Wanting to raise my confidence verbally and in my written skills. I was also very keen to learn from other practitioners and to observe them."* [FE lecturer]

- *"For me it was a mix of personal and professional motivations. I wanted more confidence to be able to do my job which meant I needed to improve my confidence to use the language both orally and in writing. It was also an opportunity for me to improve my confidence in using the language socially."* [WBL trainer]

From a Line Manager/Institutional perspective:

- *"As a school there were two main objectives for us. Firstly it was about [their] CPD. It made absolute sense for her in career terms and she has since been promoted here at the school to be a senior teacher and could be promoted even further if she so desires into a Welsh medium school. The second objective for us was that Estyn had highlighted the need for us to improve our bi-lingualism as a school. This was an obvious way for us to build capacity and respond to that agenda."* [Primary School Head]

- *"It was an important foundation for her future career."* [Primary School Head]

- *"Sending [her] on the course was really important for us. It meant that she would become our main Welsh assessor. We can now send her into schools with confidence, knowing that she'll be able to communicate with candidates in Welsh. It means we can weight her case load towards Welsh candidates."* [WBL Centre Manager]

6.3.2   On a rather more negative note, two of the practitioners we interviewed (both working in FE colleges) were candid that they had participated in the Programme for reasons other than to improve their Welsh language skills. One commented that they had felt they needed to "*leave [the College] for a while"* as *"things had become difficult",* whilst the other claimed that senior colleagues wanted them *"out of the way for a while"* whilst a departmental reorganisation took place.

6.3.3   Our interviews with former participants and their line managers suggested that the introduction of the distance learning option had been important in enabling some practitioners to participate and in enabling them to get the most out of the course. One former participant's line manager argued that in the absence of the opportunity to undertake the course on a part time, distance learning basis, the NPTP *"wouldn't have been an option",* because the organisation could not have released them from their duties to attend a full time course over three months. From the practitioner's perspective, the distance learning option had *"worked out well for me because I could see on a day-to-day basis how the skills were fitting into my work. It also meant that I was able to get in touch with the tutors and raise real-life issues with them. This gave me a lot of confidence and it meant that I didn't forget anything I learned".*

6.3.4   In contrast, however, the line manager of another distance learning course participant said that *"on reflection it would have been cleaner for [x] to go for the full three month sabbatical. Doing it the way we did [via distance learning] meant that, at times, things were bitty and we struggled for continuity. If we did it again, I'd be more inclined to take the three month sabbatical route".* [Primary Head]

6.3.5   Whilst the factors motivating practitioners to get involved in the NPTP generally coincided with their employing institutions' plans for the Welsh language, this did not necessarily translate into clear agreement from the outset upon how practitioners would use their newly acquired skills upon their return to work. In most cases, discussions between prospective NPTP participants and their line managers revolved around completing the application form and the practicalities of arranging supply cover etc. This meant that there were generally no yardsticks in place against which to measure changes in practitioners' use of the Welsh language upon their return to work. For the most part, the process of monitoring the utilisation of skills acquired through the NPTP was very informal, with one line manager commenting that they relied on *"regular chats in the corridor"* to keep abreast of the extent to which the former participant was using Welsh. That is not to say that line managers are not aware of changes in individual practitioners' use of Welsh in the wake of participating in the NPTP, of course. Another line manager commented that *"we saw a very clear and genuine need for [x] to go on this course. We had no written plan in place but it was totally obvious how those skills would be utilised on [x]'s return. I can tell you now that before [x] went on the course they were teaching Welsh second language for 33% of the time. Now [x] is teaching Welsh for 70% of the time".*

6.3.6   All of the Line Managers we spoke to said that they would be open to developing slightly more detailed plans, including setting simple objectives and milestones relating to the utilisation the skills acquired upon participants' return to work. The general view was that this could be built into the NPTP application process. Comments made by line managers included:

- *"I'd welcome a slight formalisation of the process … and for a plan to be put in place for the return of the teacher … having to put such a basic plan in place certainly wouldn't put me off the application process."* [Primary Head]

- *"Having a small plan in place would be very helpful."* [Secondary Head]

6.4   Views of the Programme

6.4.1   The NPTP had met the expectations of 71% of the respondents to our survey: 50% said that the Programme was exactly as they had expected and a further 21% believed it had been fairly close to what they had expected. A higher proportion of respondents working in schools said that the course had been exactly as they had expected (67%), whilst 45% of respondents working in the FE sector claimed that they had not been entirely sure what to expect.

6.4.2   A greater proportion of participants in the first three month course, which commenced in January 2006, said that they had not been entirely sure what to expect, as did participants in the first and second distance learning courses (which commenced in January 2007 and September 2007 respectively). Whilst this may owe much to the novelty of the courses, it also points to the need for care in briefing potential participants when launching new training approaches.

6.4.3   The vast majority of respondents (86%) believed the standard of teaching on the Programme had been 'excellent' with the remaining 14% saying that it had been either 'very good' (10%) or 'good' (4%). Similarly, nearly all respondents (90%) rated the general standard of support that they had received via course tutors as 'excellent' and the remaining 8%[24] said that it was 'very good'. There was no discernible difference in the views of participants in the two distance learning courses as to the quality of the teaching or tutor support received.

6.4.4   Most of the participants in our qualitative interviews were also very complimentary about the course, with comments including:

- *"I pay full tribute to the lecturers. They were very positive and enthusiastic and they never made me feel embarrassed. I was hugely impressed with them."* [Primary School Teacher]

- *"The course really opened up a world I wasn't fully aware of. It really widened my vistas."* [Primary School Teacher]

- *"It was a really happy experience for me. Cen and the tutors had an infectious enthusiasm. It was a very nurturing atmosphere."* [Primary School Head]
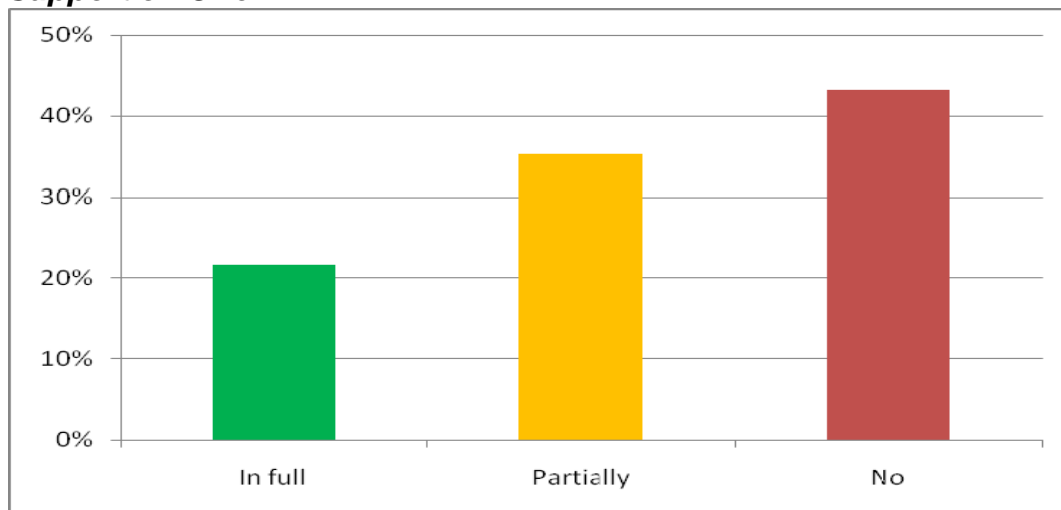
6.5   Post Course Support

6.5.1   Figure 6.3 below shows the proportion of respondents to our survey who had capitalised, in full or in part, upon the post course support offered by the

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[24] 2% of respondents did not answer this question.

two Universities, as well as the proportion who had not availed themselves of this opportunity. It shows that just over half of respondents (56%) had taken advantage of the post course support offered, whilst 43% had not done so. A greater proportion of respondents working in the primary sector (64%) had taken advantage of the opportunity, whilst 50% of those working in secondary schools and FE colleges had not.

Figure 6.3: Extent to which Respondents Capitalised upon the Post Course Support on Offer

6.5.2   All respondents who had taken up the post course support had found it useful, with the large majority (89%) of the view that it had been either 'very useful' (41%) or 'extremely useful' (48%). Primary sector respondents were more likely to rate the post course support as 'extremely useful' whilst FE sector respondents were more likely to rate it as only 'moderately useful'.

6.5.3   Only two of the former participants we interviewed had availed themselves of the post course support, though in one case, the individual had chosen to spend some days in a Welsh medium primary school within a different county. This person, a secondary school teacher, commented that *"I arranged a visit to a Welsh language primary in another county as part of this. It was really interesting to be exposed to year 6 first language Welsh pupils and this helped me a lot in terms of thinking about my teaching techniques"*. This person had decided to select a Welsh medium primary school outside of their own county LEA in order to gain an alternative perspective and in particular had wanted to contrast the Welsh language capabilities of year 6 pupils in a Welsh medium primary to the Welsh language capabilities of students in their own school. This teacher reflected that the year 6 Welsh primary school pupils they had encountered on the visit would *"easily have been able to achieve a GCSE pass in second language Welsh"*.

6.5.4   Another interviewee working in the FE sector had arranged to return to the university in question in *"February 2009 for 2 or 3 days I think. Hopefully it will be a good top up and I'm glad the College are happy for me to do it"*.

6.5.5   Some 42% of respondents had not taken advantage of the post course support offered, with proportionally fewer respondents from the secondary and FE sectors falling into this category (50% each). The reasons most commonly given by respondents for not having taken up the offer of post course support were:

- lack of time (55%);

- too much work (41%);

- no need for support (18%);

- not aware support was available (14%); and

- illness (5%).

6.5.6   As indicated above, only two of the former participants we interviewed had taken advantage of the post course support available. The reasons given by other interviewees for not doing so very much echoed those listed above:

- *"My timetable has just been too full"* (though this person went on to say that *"I would really have liked to had there been the time available"*). [FE lecturer]

- *"I've gone back to the tutors and they've helped me check over a few translations in materials I've produced which was really useful, but other than that I didn't need the full post course support."* [WBL Provider participant]

- *"I thought it sounded a bit woolly really and to be honest I didn't understand what it was."* [Primary Head]

6.5.7   Our survey asked respondents how, if at all, the post course support could be improved. Responses to this question included:

- allowing former participants a longer period of time to avail themselves of the three days' post course support, with suggestions ranging from one to two and even five years;

- putting on 'refresher' courses, so that former participants embroiled in their day to day teaching responsibilities could have time and support to develop new Welsh medium/bilingual learning resources;

- arranging opportunities for former participants to network once every term or half term;

- helping former participants tap into Welsh language related social networks to enable them to make more use of the language outside work; and

- providing former participants with on-line access to tutors to reduce travelling time.

6.6 Effects of Participation

6.6.1   In this section we examine the effects of in the NPTP upon practitioners' use of Welsh in their professional lives. In doing so, we compare the use which practitioners claimed to make of the language prior to participation with the use made since their return to work, after participating in the NPTP.

The Use of Welsh for Teaching

6.6.2   Figure 6.4 shows that overall, there was a 22% increase (from 12% to 34%) in the numbers of respondents claiming to do more than half of their teaching through the medium of Welsh and a 23% reduction (from 25% to 2%) in the numbers who said that they did none of their teaching through the medium of Welsh.

Figure 6.4: Proportion of Teaching Done Through the Medium of Welsh
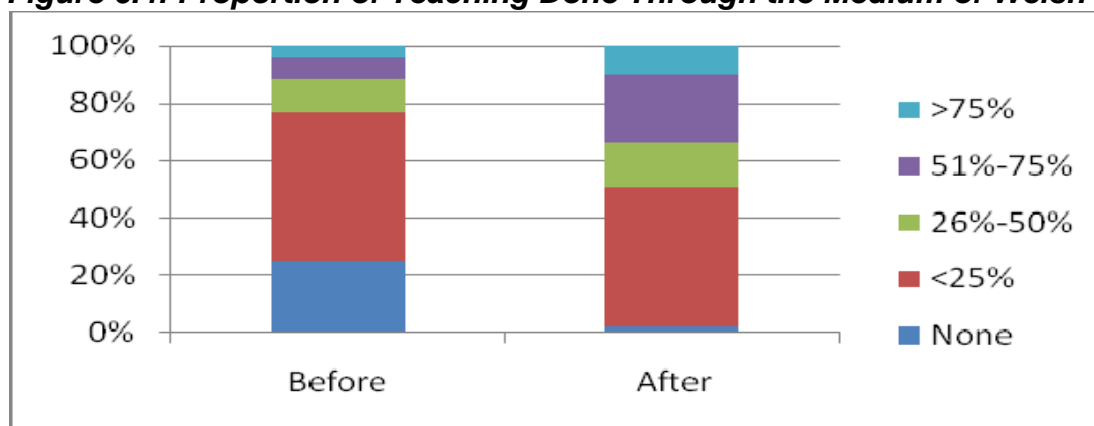
6.6.3   The most pronounced change was among respondents from the FE sector, 50% of whom claimed to make no use of Welsh prior to participation and 100% of whom said that they did at least some of their teaching through the medium of Welsh after being on the NPTP. Indeed, 20% more respondents (at 25%) from the FE sector claimed to do between half and three quarters of their teaching through the medium of Welsh following their participation in the course, albeit that a small majority (55%) still did less than a quarter of their teaching in Welsh. There was also a significant increase (24%) in the proportion of primary school teachers claiming to do at least half of their teaching through the medium of Welsh and a corresponding reduction in the proportion claiming not to use Welsh in the classroom (9%) or to use Welsh for less than a quarter of their teaching (15%).

6.6.4   Figure 6.5 shows that there was also an increase in the extent to which respondents claimed to speak Welsh to learners outside the classroom, with 16% more respondents saying that at least half of their informal communication with learners is now undertaken through the medium of Welsh and 17% fewer claiming to speak no Welsh outside the classroom.

Figure 6.5: Proportion of Respondents Speaking Welsh to Learners Outside the Classroom
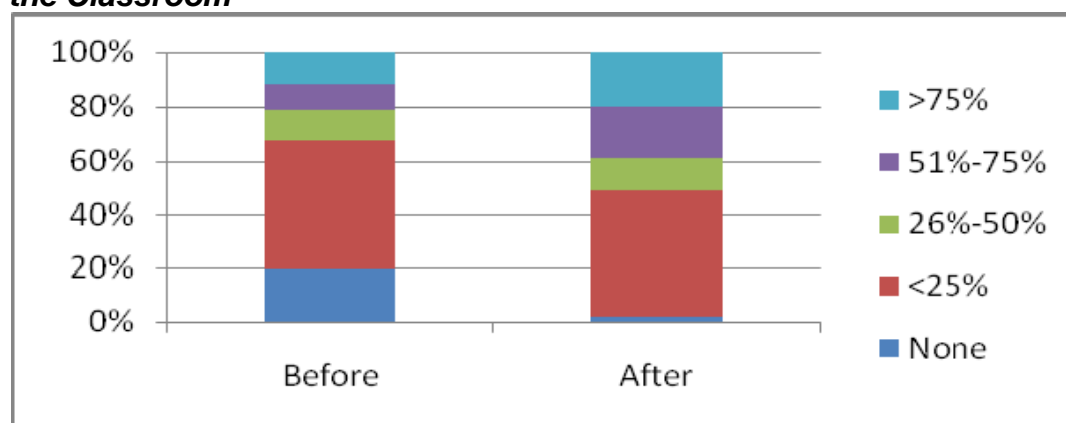
6.6.5 Our discussions with a sample of former participants threw more light on the ways in which their use of Welsh had changed since taking part in the NPTP. Specific examples included:

- Several teachers working in non Welsh medium primary schools spoke of the increased use they made of *"incidental Welsh"* in the classroom. Some of these also commented that the Programme had equipped them to capitalise more fully upon the inputs of 'Athrawon Bro'[25] who visited their schools.

- One primary school teacher had, since returning from the course, taken up a secondment opportunity to work as an 'Athrawes Fro' for an LEA. This individual hoped to be in a position to continue with this role on a permanent basis.

- Another primary school teacher had agreed with a local University to observe and assess trainee teachers undertaking their PGCE courses through the medium of Welsh. This person was undertaking this work in addition to their teaching responsibilities.

- A teacher working in a bilingual secondary school was in the process of introducing their subject through the medium of Welsh to Year 7, 8 and 9 pupils for the first time.

- Another secondary school teacher, who had taught through the medium of Welsh before attending the course, argued that *"the way I say things is better ... I've noted that I mutate in the right places",* and that pupils consequently get a better deal. This teacher felt that they had moved from being regarded as a *"[x subject] teacher who's learning to speak Welsh to just a [x subject] teacher".*

- A teacher of Welsh as a second language at a secondary school was acting up as Head of Department and had increased their teaching load (of Welsh as a second language) from 33% to 70% of their time.

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[25] Athrawon Bro (Area Teachers) are visiting Welsh language teachers who work in schools alongside class teachers.

- One FE practitioner claimed that the course had strengthened their bilingual teaching skills, explaining that prior to the course, they used to *"forget either the Welsh or the English and go off on tangents"*. By now, they felt that they are able to strike a better balance between the two languages.

- Another FE practitioner had sorted students into groups along language lines in order that Welsh speakers could use Welsh rather than have to turn to English to accommodate non Welsh speakers. In doing this, however, the practitioner in question had been conscious of the danger of *"creating conflicts"* between ill-matched students.

6.6.6   There were however some cases where increased use of Welsh had not occurred including:

- One teacher who, since returning from the course, had taken up a new post in a non Welsh primary school, despite their aspiration to work in a bi-lingual or Welsh medium environment. Even before moving, this individual had been frustrated by the lack of opportunity to put their new skills to use at school.

- One secondary school teacher who felt confident in teaching their subject through the medium of Welsh up to the end of Key Stage 4, said that they had to revert to English to deliver the A level course, making only incidental use of Welsh in the classroom, referring to a tendency among pupils to opt to study his particular subject through the medium of English post 16 because of their perception that *"they won't have an option to do it in Welsh once they get to university",* and that "*it's easier to make the change at 16 than at 18".*

- The individual who had seen the NPTP as a means of taking a break from a difficult work situation claimed that *"nothing had changed"* since their return, which clearly raises serious questions as to the purpose of this individual attending the course in the first place.

- Three FE lecturers who despite the desire to use more Welsh (and the fact they were doing so with colleagues and external stakeholders) were frustrated by the lack of demand at a student level to be able to practice more Welsh within the classroom and make more use of materials they had produced whilst on the course. Whilst this is largely anecdotal in nature and caution must clearly be taken with such small numbers, it may hint towards a wider issue in that the impacts generated by the Programme could be more constrained in the FE sector as a result of lower demand for bi-lingual or Welsh medium provision.

6.6.7   Allied to this final point, participants in the Sgiliaith conference referred to the constraining effects of a dearth of assessors and verifiers capable of working through the medium of Welsh upon the delivery of FE courses through the medium of Welsh/bilingually.

6.6.8   Some 70% of respondents to our survey said that they were very confident in speaking Welsh to learners following their participation in the NPTP (50% more than was the case beforehand) and a further 28% said that they were fairly

confident. The most marked change was among respondents working in the primary sector, 69% more of whom (at 80%) claimed to be very confident and none of whom claimed to be insecure in using Welsh with learners after participation. Our interviews with a sample of former participants confirmed the NPTP's role in increasing practitioners' confidence in using Welsh to teach and to communicate with learners in less formal settings. Comments included:

- *"Before the course, I would just take a guess at a sentence if I wasn't sure … now I'm much more confident in myself."* [Secondary school teacher]

- *"I felt totally different when I came back … far more confident. I don't have to revert to English in class anymore. I think I've gained more than confidence in just the language … I'm sure that I'm more innovative in the way that I teach now."* [Secondary School Teacher]

- The course *"moved me from being too nervous to dare … from being a complete beginner to having confidence."* [FE lecturer]

- Participating in the course gave one interviewee *"the confidence to admit when I don't know a word/term and to look words up in the dictionary."* [FE lecturer]

6.6.9   Discussions with former participants' line managers also confirmed the NPTP's role in building participants' confidence, but also pointed to knock on benefits of that increased confidence to their employing institutions:

- "S*ince she's come back, her confidence has increased immensely and as a result I have no doubt that she is also more competent at her job."* [Secondary School Head]

- *"She was already an exceptional teacher. Going on this course gave her an extra bounce and a renewed impetus to her career. She gained an amazing level of extra self confidence from the course and as a result there's been a noticeable difference in her motivation. This course strengthened an already strong asset for our school."* [Primary School Head]

6.6.10   Respondents who made the most use of Welsh remained the most confident with, for example, 82% of those who said that they used Welsh for most of their teaching feeling very confident in doing so, compared to 56% of those who did less than a quarter of their teaching in Welsh. However, our discussions with former NPTP participants highlighted the importance of this increased confidence in encouraging practitioners to make use of the language. In a sense, there is a circular relationship between having the confidence to use Welsh for professional purposes and the use made of Welsh in the classroom, with one effectively 'bootstrapping' the other.

6.6.11   This, of course, points to the importance of former NPTP practitioners continuing to use the language upon completing the Programme, something which several of the former participants we interviewed volunteered without prompting. A contributor from one of the universities involved in the delivery of the Programme

reinforced the point by commenting that *"we see the loss of confidence among practitioners [who do not have the opportunity to use the language extensively upon their return to work] when they come back for follow-up days".* Participants at the Sgiliaith conference also pointed to the importance of a sustained use of Welsh in maintaining former NPTP participants' confidence and language skills upon their return to work, and argued that greater rigour was needed on their employing institutions' part in ensuring that this happens.

6.6.12   Indeed, in this context, it is notable that two of those interviewed on a face to face basis did not feel confident enough/able to conduct the full interview in Welsh and asked to revert to English a short way through the discussion. These individuals felt that a lack of opportunity to practice Welsh regularly meant that they had *"slipped back",* as one person put it, in terms of their linguistic development since completing the course.

6.6.13   Participants in the Sgiliaith conference argued that better systems need to be put in place.

The Use of Welsh to Assess Pupils/Learners

6.6.14   Figure 6.6 shows that there was a 27% increase in the proportion of respondents (at 83%) claiming to undertake at least some of their assessment work through the medium of Welsh, and a 10% increase in the proportion claiming to use Welsh for most of their assessing. The change was most pronounced among FE practitioners, 95% of whom claimed to use Welsh for at least some learner assessments compared to 50% prior to participating in the NPTP.

Figure 6.6: Proportion of Learner Assessment Done Through the Medium of Welsh
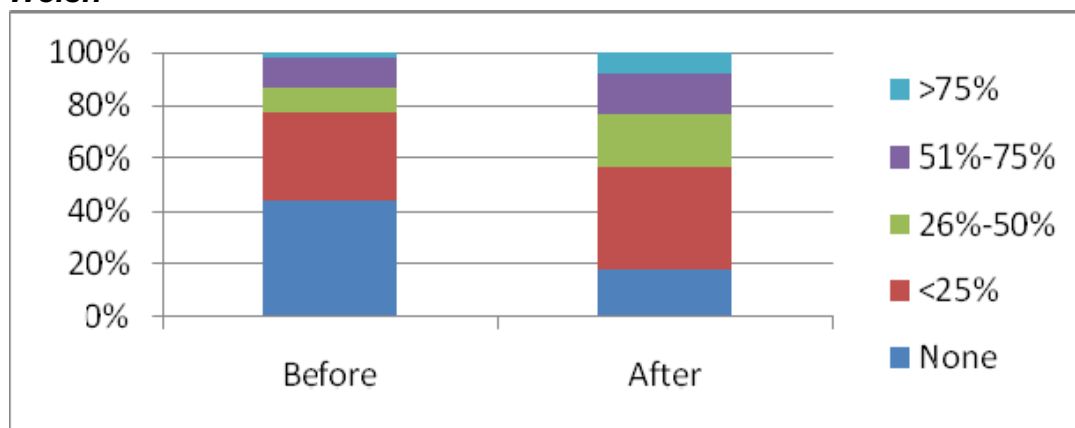
6.6.15   Respondents working in secondary schools undertook a greater proportion of their assessment work through the medium of Welsh than any other group, with 67% claiming to do so most of the time. This represented an increase of 34% and a corresponding reduction in the proportion of secondary school teachers undertaking less than half of their assessment work through the medium of Welsh.

6.6.16   After participation, 98% of respondents claimed to be confident in assessing pupil/learners through the medium of Welsh, in comparison with 55% of respondents prior to getting involved with the Programme. The growth in confidence was greatest among respondents from the primary sector, which saw an increase of 64% in the proportion of respondents who claimed to be quite or very confident. The proportions of respondents working in secondary schools and the FE sector claiming to feel more confident also increased by 33% and 35% respectively. Again it followed that respondents who made the most use of Welsh in assessing learners were the most confident in doing so, with 83% of those who used Welsh for most of the time claiming to be very confident in doing so compared with 30% of those who used it for less than 25% of their time.

6.6.17   Our discussions with former participants painted a rather less positive picture, with most interviewees not having increased to any measurable degree the volume of assessment work undertaken through the medium of Welsh. Exceptions to this were:

- a secondary school teacher who now provides verbal feedback to pupils undertaking an accelerated Welsh course;

- one WBL trainer who was assessing learners undertaking NVQ level 2 and 3 courses (classroom assistants) on an on-going basis through the medium of Welsh;

- an FE lecturer who was supervising and assessing the dissertations of some B.Ed. students who had chosen to submit their work in Welsh; and

- a primary school teacher who (as noted above) was observing and assessing PGCE students in the medium of Welsh on a part-time basis for a local University whilst maintaining their teaching duties.

The Use of Welsh to Communicate with Parents

6.6.18   We asked practitioners working in primary and secondary schools whether they used Welsh to communicate with pupils' parents (both verbally and in writing) prior to and after participating in the NPTP. This question was not asked of practitioners working in post 16 settings.

6.6.19   Figure 6.7 shows that there was a small increase (9%) in the proportion of respondents claiming to speak to pupils' parents in Welsh at least some of the time, though the majority (59%) spoke English to parents as a rule. However, the proportion of respondents who claimed to use Welsh for most of the time in such situations increased by 10% (from 15% to 25%). All of the respondents who said that they spoke Welsh to pupils' parents felt confident in doing so.

Figure 6.7: Proportion of Respondents Speaking Welsh to Pupils' Parents
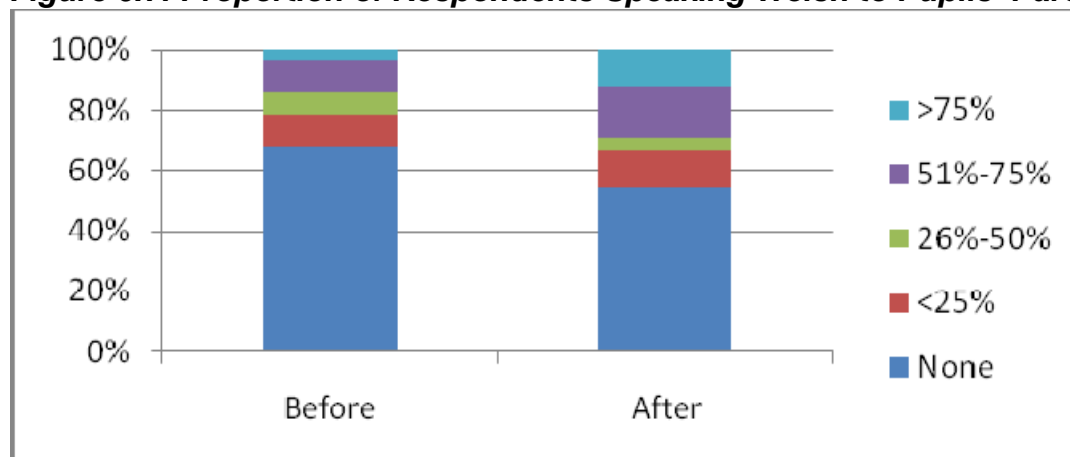

6.6.20   A similar picture emerged in relation to the extent to which respondents used Welsh to communicate with parents in writing. Overall, 16% more respondents claimed to use Welsh to communicate in writing with parents at least some of the time and 4% more claimed to do so most of the time. The overwhelming majority (91%) of those who wrote to pupils' parents in Welsh said that they were confident in doing so. Again, however, the majority of respondents tended to write to pupils' parents in English.

6.6.21   The single most important factor preventing respondents from using Welsh to communicate with pupils' parents was those parents' inability to speak Welsh. There was certainly no sense in which practitioners avoided using Welsh with Welsh speaking parents because they felt insecure in doing so or because the established practice was to speak English to parents. Indeed, our discussions with a sample of former NPTP participants suggested that they would welcome the opportunity to speak Welsh to more parents.

The Use of Welsh to Communicate with Colleagues

6.6.22   Figure 6.8 shows that following participation in the NPTP, 92% of respondents claimed to use Welsh to communicate with their colleagues at least some of the time, which is 24% more than was the case before participation. All respondents from the secondary school and FE sectors spoke at least some Welsh to colleagues (compared to 87% and 75% respectively before participation), but this proportion fell to 81% among primary school teachers.

Figure 6.8: Proportion of Respondents Speaking Welsh to Colleagues
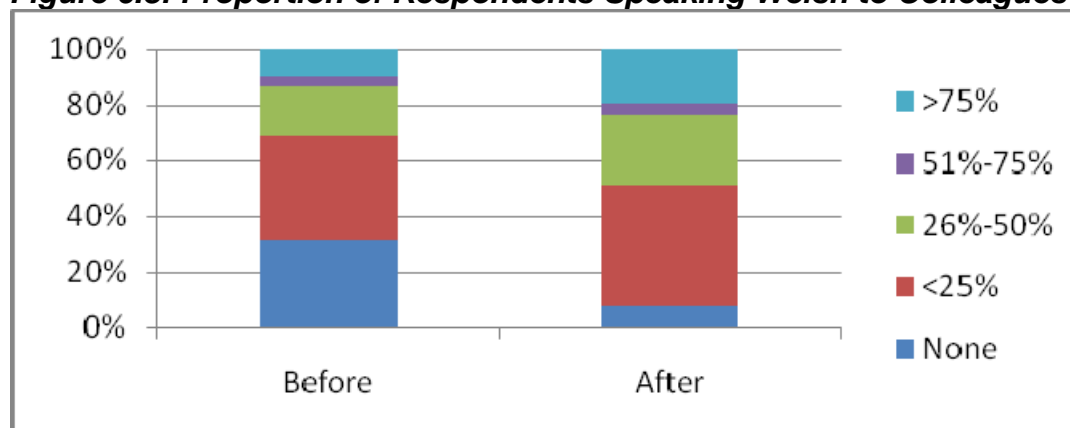
6.6.23   Some 24% of respondents claimed to speak Welsh to colleagues most of the time, 10% more than was the case before participation. Respondents working in secondary schools claimed to make rather more use of Welsh in communicating with colleagues (with 83% claiming to use it for more than three quarters of their communication) than did those from the primary sector (52% of whom claimed to use it for between a quarter and half of their communication) and the FE sector (85% of whom claimed to use it for less than half their communication with colleagues). In essence, participation in the NPTP seems to have led those who made no use of the language with colleagues (mainly primary and FE practitioners) to use it at least some of the time, and those who already used it some of the time (primarily secondary school teachers) to use it for a greater proportion of their communication with colleagues.

6.6.24   Nearly all respondents (98%) claimed to be confident to speak to colleagues in Welsh following their participation in the NPTP, compared with 66% of respondents beforehand. The greatest change occurred among FE practitioners, where there was an increase of 35% (from 60% to 95%) in the proportion of respondents saying that they felt confident to communicate with colleagues in Welsh. As would have been expected, those who communicated the most with colleagues in Welsh were the most confident with 92% of those who stated that they use Welsh most of the time when speaking with colleagues very confident compared with 64% amongst those who only used Welsh up to a quarter of their time.

6.6.25   A handful of respondents said that they did not speak Welsh to colleagues even after participating in the NPTP, quite simply because none of their colleagues spoke Welsh. Others only made occasional use of Welsh, which they put down to a lack of confidence in using the language resulting from a lack of opportunity to use it upon their return to work.

6.6.26   Our discussions with former participants bore out the findings of our survey. Comments made by interviewees included:

- *"I'm much happier now to use Welsh to communicate with students, colleagues and Heads in schools."* [FE lecturer]

- *"Once you've started speaking Welsh to people, it's really difficult to revert to speaking English … so it's a pretty natural thing by now."* [Secondary school teacher]

6.6.27   There was also a sense in which participants' enthusiasm for the Welsh language upon their return to work was helping to infect colleagues, with one commentator going as far as to say that *"it feels a bit Welsher around here now"*, following their participation in the NPTP. Another contributor, who had learnt Welsh as an adult, said that their colleagues had become increasingly willing to speak Welsh to them *"at the photocopier",* which they perceived as a sign that they had been accepted as a Welsh speaker rather than a Welsh learner and which gave a valuable opportunity to practice their language skills. In essence, involvement with the NPTP was seen as the start of a virtuous circle by some interviewees.

6.6.28   Our survey of former participants also pointed to their making more use of Welsh with professionals outside their immediate sphere of work. For example:

- One contributor wrote that they feel *"much more confident in meetings and committees held in Welsh"* including Welsh medium *"in service teacher training"* sessions.

- Another wrote that they felt much more confident participating in Welsh medium *"meetings with external partners and with members of the public … I can develop bilingual presentations"*.

The Use of Welsh for Administrative Purposes

6.6.29   Figure 6.9 compares the proportion of their administration work which respondents claimed to do through the medium Welsh before and after participation in the NPTP. It shows that 86% of respondents claimed to be using Welsh to do at least some of their administrative work upon after participating, compared with 54% who claimed to do so previously. Within the primary and FE sectors, 44% and 50% respectively of respondents who said that they undertook no administrative tasks through the medium of Welsh prior to participation had started to use the language for at least some of their administration work since returning to work. Some 32% of respondents claimed to do most of their administration work in Welsh, with that proportion rising to 84% among those working in secondary schools.

Figure 6.9: Proportion of Administration Undertaken in Welsh
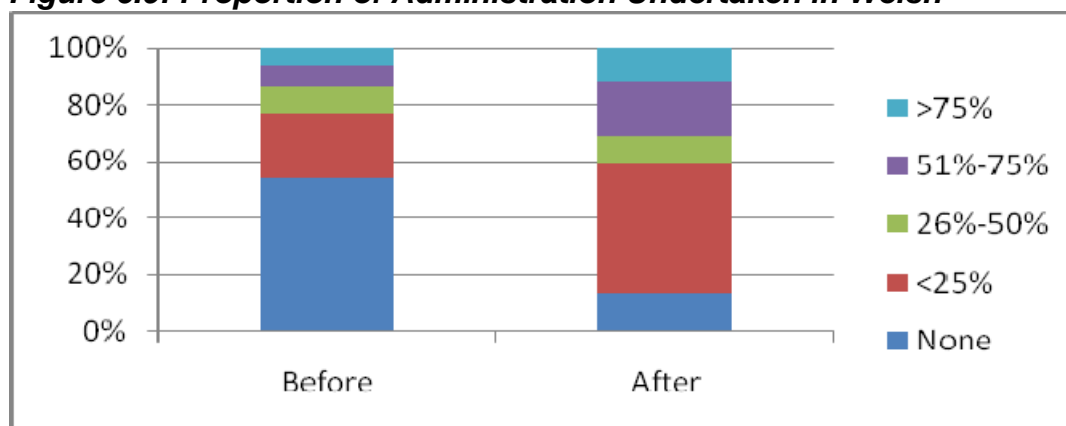
The Use of Welsh for Extra-curricular Activities

6.6.30   We asked practitioners working in primary and secondary schools how much time they devoted to Welsh medium extra curricular activities each week. Figure 6.10 shows that the proportion of respondents involved in Welsh medium extra curricular activities increased by 25% (from 54% to 79%) following their participation in the NPTP, with the bulk of the extra activity undertaken being of up to three hours' duration. The greatest increase was seen among respondents from the primary sector, 26% more of whom undertook some form of Welsh medium extra curricular activity after participation in the NPTP.

Figure 6.10: Respondents' Involvement in Welsh Medium Extra Curricular Activities
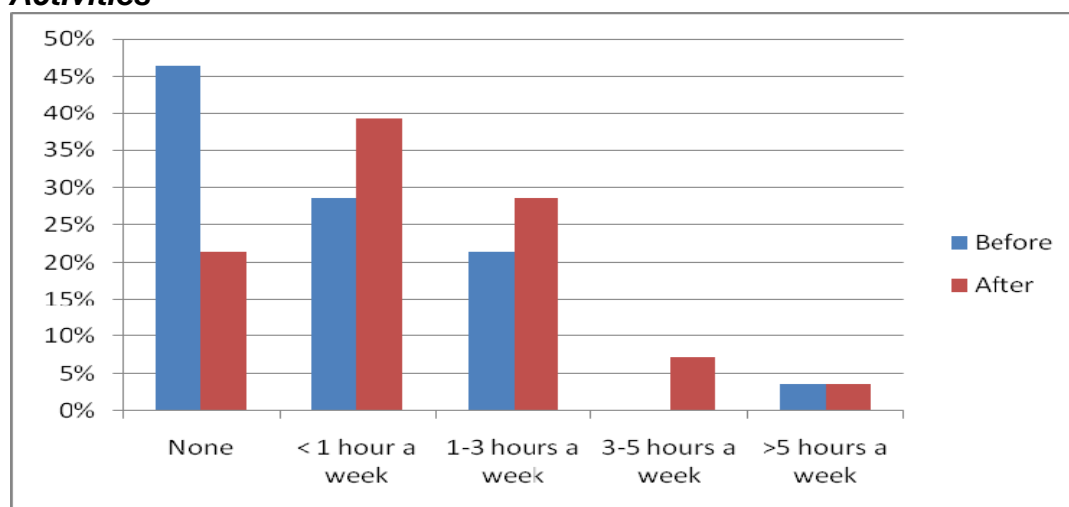
6.6.31   The forms of Welsh medium extra-curricular activities most commonly undertaken were:

- sports (at 36% compared to 27% previously);

- Urdd (at 32%, pretty much in line with the level of involvement before participating);

- other cultural activities excluding Urdd (at 18% compared to 27% previously); and

- other (at 36% compared to 33% previously). These included involvement in an additional GSCE course, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, a Gardening Club, Welsh Clubs and social events (which may account for some of the apparent decline in practitioners' involvement in non Urdd cultural activities).

6.6.32   One respondent also claimed to be teaching Welsh to colleagues after school hours.

The Use of Welsh Medium or Bilingual Teaching and Learning Materials

6.6.33   The large majority of respondents (83%) had produced in excess of five hours' worth of learning/teaching materials whilst on the course[26], with 100% of those working in secondary schools and WBL having done so. The types of learning/teaching materials most commonly produced by respondents were:

- subject based terminology ('Termiadur') (40%);
- PowerPoint Presentations/Reports (15%);
- Student Worksheets (10%);
- Lesson Plans/Lectures (8%); and
- translation of existing material (6%).

6.6.34   The production of these materials was seen as a positive by-product of the course by many of the former participants who we interviewed, with most making at least some use of these resources which they had produced in their day-to-day work. Examples included:

- a WBL trainer who used assessment materials which they had produced whilst on the NPTP on a regular basis to assess the progress of classroom assistants undergoing work based training at their host schools;
- a secondary school teacher who had produced Welsh language materials to support the introduction of their subject through the medium of Welsh to year 7 pupils for the first time; and
- a primary school teacher who used lesson plans produced whilst on the course.

6.6.35   There were however some instances where very limited use of materials was being made. One former FE college participant said that *"I've generated a lot of materials that in theory are very useful, but they're not being used because there's no demand for them".* This points to a rather predictable link between the utilisation of resources produced whilst on the NPTP and the extent to which former participants are able to use the Welsh language for teaching purposes upon their return to work.

6.6.36   Nearly all of the respondents to our survey (94%) said that they had produced further Welsh medium/bilingual teaching/learning materials since completing the NPTP. A significant proportion (46%) had produced more than five hours' worth of such material, with that proportion growing to 83% among secondary school teachers. There is a strong suggestion that the 6% of respondents who had not produced any Welsh medium/bilingual material since completing the NPTP had not done so because they were not teaching through the medium of

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[26] Course tutors were surprised that 100% of respondents did not claim to have produced at least five hours' learning/teaching materials, given that lesson/lecture plans formed the core of most participants' personal work whilst on the course.

Welsh/bilingually, and were, thus, not in a position to dedicate time to such developments.

6.6.37   Our discussions with former participants suggested that they were considerably more confident in producing Welsh medium/bilingual resources following their involvement in the NPTP and that this had a knock on benefit to their employing institution in terms of time saving. One secondary school teacher argued that the improvement in their ability to produce Welsh medum resources meant that they did not need to refer to colleagues to check their work, or where they did, the checking took considerably less time and the resources produced needed considerably less correcting afterwards. Similarly a FE practitioner explained that their employing institution's policy is to use bilingual materials wherever possible, and that they had developed bilingual resources before participating in the NPTP, but had needed to call upon the support of the institutions' translators to do so. Since completing the Programme, they had created further bilingual resources without needing any input from the translators. This evidence would certainly suggest a cost saving, if not entirely transparent, to institutions as a result of practitioners' participation in the NPTP.

6.6.38   Figure 6.11 shows the proportion of the teaching/learning materials used by respondents to our survey that was Welsh medium or bilingual both before and after their participation in the NPTP. It shows that overall, there was a 26% increase in the proportion of respondents who said that at least half of the teaching/learning materials they used were Welsh medium/bilingual, and this extended to as much as 66% of those working in secondary schools. The greatest change was among respondents form the FE sector, 30% more of who claimed that at least half the resources they used following the NPTP were Welsh medium/bilingual and 30% fewer of who claimed not to use Welsh medium materials at all. Indeed, the overall proportion of respondents claiming not to use Welsh medium/bilingual teaching learning materials at all was 23% lower at 6%.

Figure 6.11: Proportion of the Teaching and Learning Materials Used which are Welsh Medium or Bilingual
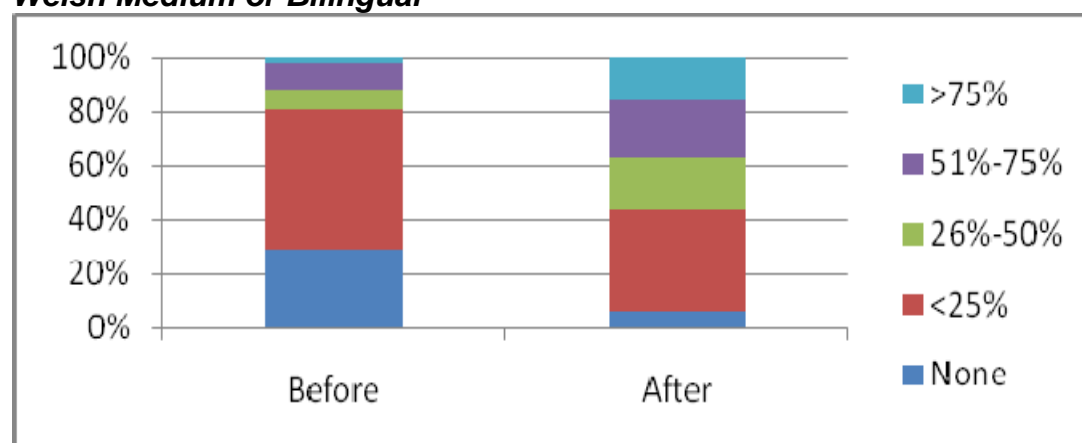
6.6.39   The majority (65%) of respondents had used Welsh medium/bilingual teaching/learning materials from external sources, with that proportion rising to 83% among secondary school teachers. The most commonly used sources of such materials were:

- NGFL (65%);

- BBC (62%); and

- other (50%) which included the Basic Skills Cumru, Sparklebox, Primary Resources, Union Resources, Cynnal, Sgiliaith, Commucation4all.co.uk and a number of other web-sites.

6.6.40   Respondents from the primary and secondary sectors tended to make use of resources available via the NGFL and the BBC, whilst respondents from the FE and WBL sectors made use of resources form a wider range of sources.

Effects upon Welsh Medium or Bilingual Provision

6.6.41   Almost a third (29%) of respondents to our survey said that their organisation had introduced new Welsh medium/bilingual courses or modules as a result of their involvement with the NPTP. All of these new courses/modules were introduced by FE Institutions and were generally pitched at NVQ levels 2 and 3. New titles introduced were:

- First Diploma and National Diploma in Sports;

- OCN Welsh in the Workplace;

- Key Skills;

- 'Iaith ar Waith';

- Adults Protection, Working with Adults with Dementia and Managing Diseases;

- OCN Bilingualism and Bilingual Tutoring to Support Lessons;

- Animal Care Diploma;

- NVQ Beauty; and

- CACHE Child Care.

The Wider Effects of the NPTP upon Participants

6.6.42   Finally, our survey and our discussions with former NPTP participants revealed a number of wider, more personal effects upon their lives. For example, 19% of respondents to our survey said that they had secured a new job or promotion, either as a teacher/lecturer or in a post related to teaching. The comments made by individual practitioners included:

- "I would never have applied for a job in a bilingual school before going on the course. Now I teach Welsh as both a first and second language and I also take the first language Welsh registration class."

- "An opportunity came to be appointed Welsh Language Champion for the department. This means that I'm expected to support colleagues' efforts in offering bilingual learning opportunities to students."

6.6.43   A further 8% of respondents claimed that they had applied for new posts following their participation in the course – *"going on the course gave me the confidence to apply for jobs in the Welsh [medium] sector".* However, not all respondents in such situations felt that the course had adequately prepared them for work in the Welsh medium sector, with one commenting that *"the intention was, with my head's support, that I'd get a job in the Welsh [medium] sector. Unfortunately, the feedback that I've had is that the course wasn't enough [for me] to get a job in the Welsh [medium] sector, and that's [been] a big disappointment for me".* This, possibly, points to the need for a degree of realism in managing participants' expectations, although it is worth noting that NPTP tutors do seek to make the limitations of the programme clear to applicants during pre course interviews. Testimonial letters issued to participants upon completing the NPTP also provide an indication of their linguistic competence and should, arguably, render them more realistic about their skills and further learning needs.

6.6.44   A handful of interviewees also commented that the NPTP had increased their confidence in using Welsh in social and community settings and had allowed them to become more involved in Welsh medium community activities. Comments made by former participants included:

- *"I can speak to Welsh friends … I didn't have the confidence to do this before … but since finishing the course I always speak Welsh to people who speak Welsh."*

- *"I use Facebook in Welsh … and I also send text messages in Welsh … I wouldn't have thought of doing this before going on the course."*

- *"I'm much more confident in speaking, writing and reading Welsh, so I take part in more Welsh things in the area."*

- *"My written Welsh has improved substantially … [now] I'm sufficiently confident to take on a role like president or secretary in a Welsh society [community group]."*

6.6.45   Indeed, one individual had enrolled on a course to train to become a Welsh for Adults tutor.

6.6.46   A number of respondents pointed to the effects which improving their reading and writing skills had had upon them, including:

- *"I feel a lot more confident in reading novels and magazines in Welsh."*

- *"Before, if something was written in both languages, I'd read the English version. Now I read the Welsh."*

6.6.47   Finally, individuals referred to the beneficial effects which having a stronger command of Welsh had upon their ability to communicate with family members, and more particularly to engage in their children's education:

- *"I'm happier speaking Welsh to my husband now … he's a fluent speaker."*

- *"I have four children. Welsh is their mother tongue, and yet, after being on the course, I can help them improve their written Welsh."*

- *"My sons say that my Welsh has improved … [which makes me] proud."*

7.   Conclusions

7.1   Introduction

7.1.1   In this chapter, we present our conclusions about the effectiveness of the NPTP in developing the Welsh language and pedagogical skills of practitioners to a degree where they are able to teach through the medium of Welsh or bilingually.

7.1.2   Prior to doing that, however, we touch upon the extent to which the recommendations made in the 2006/07 Evaluation Report have been acted upon and consider the progress made in delivering the Programme in the context of changes made in response to those recommendations.

7.2   Extent to which Recommendations of 2007 Evaluation have been acted upon

7.2.1   The 2007 Evaluation Report made a total of 22 recommendations. Whilst all of these recommendations were accepted, not all were acted upon in full. Those which were acted upon in full revolved around:

- extending the lifespan of the Programme;

- opening up Programme eligibility to other categories of teachers/trainers; and

- planning and marketing courses.

7.2.2   Since the extension of the NPTP Programme in July 2007, eight courses have been run, in line with the target set in the contract extension document. As was the case prior to the Programme's extension, the numbers of practitioners recruited have been a little lower than sought although recruitment onto the April and September 2008 courses looked rather more promising and came within the target range set in the contract extension document. A total of 63 practitioners have participated in the NPTP since the contract extension, bringing the total number of practitioners trained to 135.

7.2.3   Arrangements were put in place to enable supply teachers and LEA staff to participate in the Programme, and five individuals have availed themselves of this opportunity thus far. Practitioners working in the Higher Education sector were also invited to participate and two HE lecturers enrolled onto the September 2008 distance learning course.

7.2.4   As well as opening up eligibility to different categories of practitioners, concerted efforts were made to promote the Programme during 2007 and 2008 through presentations, targeted advertising and the distribution of promotional materials. Whilst the numbers of practitioners recruited showed some improvement over that period, some concern must remain about the level of demand generated.

7.2.5   Recommendations to do with formalising arrangements for probing how the skills to be acquired by participants would be utilised were addressed in part through the addition of two statements to the application form, to which prospective participants' line managers are now required to subscribe. However, this did not formalise arrangements to the extent envisaged in the 2007 Evaluation report. Whilst participating practitioners' ambitions in undertaking the training were generally in keeping with their employing institutions' broad aspirations for Welsh medium/ bilingual provision, it was not always clear precisely how the training linked to participants' wider Continuous Professional Development plans or how their work practice was expected to change following their participation in the NPTP.

7.2.6   Neither was the extent to which the skills acquired by former participants were used once back in the workplace generally monitored or reported to WAG, despite undertakings given at the application stage to provide WAG with progress reports in this respect. This means that it has not been possible for WAG to measure the effects of the Programme on learning provision on an ongoing basis. However, the line managers to whom we spoke were not averse to the idea of coming up with simple plans setting out how NPTP applicants would use their new skills upon their return to work and providing brief accounts of the progress made against those plans following participation.

7.2.7   A number of recommendations were not acted upon, for various reasons, but primarily because of a lack of resources within the Programme budget or because it was not thought practical to do so. These recommendations were to do with:

- setting targets and monitoring progress in terms of the use made of the new skills acquired and the volume of Welsh medium provision delivered;
- gathering and disseminating examples of good practice;
- maintaining contact with former NPTP participants, in order to enable the ongoing exchange of good practice, to gather information about the Programme's effects and to help promote the Programme to a wider audience;
- putting in place a structured approach to the development and sharing of teaching and learning resources, in order to avoid duplication as well as to add to the body of material in existence;
- recruiting participants of similar linguistic ability onto particular courses and tailoring the teaching of methodology to reflect course participants' previous experience; and
- considering further the possibility of developing some sort of formal accreditation for the Programme.

7.3   Effects of the NPTP upon Teaching Practice

7.3.1   Prior to exploring the effects of participating in the NPTP upon practitioners' work practices, our fieldwork sought to establish a baseline in terms of the use made

of Welsh for various professional purposes and the use made of Welsh medium/ bilingual learning materials.

7.3.2   Our survey showed that practitioners working in secondary schools made more use of the Welsh language for various purposes prior to participation in the NPTP than did their counterparts working in primary schools or the FE sector[27]. In part, this reflects the fact that a higher proportion of those drawn from the secondary sector worked in bilingual settings and, therefore, had greater opportunity to use Welsh. Allied to this, our survey pointed to a fairly predictable correlation between the use made of Welsh for professional purposes (before participation) and the degree of confidence which practitioners felt in using the language.

7.3.3   Our fieldwork showed clearly that participation in the NPTP led to a measurable growth in the proportion of teaching done through the medium of Welsh upon former participants' return to work. In short, those who used Welsh for professional purposes before participating in the NPTP did so to a greater extent afterwards, and those who did not use Welsh beforehand, did so to at least some degree afterwards.

7.3.4   However, the extent to which practitioners' use of Welsh increased following their participation in the NPTP was governed to a large degree by the opportunity they had to use Welsh at work, with those working in predominantly English medium settings finding it most difficult to use the language extensively or to any great depth (i.e. more than *"incidental Welsh"*). Even in bilingual settings, and particularly so in the FE sector, some practitioners were hindered from using Welsh to the extent they would have liked by weak demand for Welsh medium provision.

7.3.5   This reinforces the need for careful planning in the run up to practitioners' participation in the NPTP to ensure that robust arrangements are put in place to ensure that they have the opportunity to apply their newly acquired skills upon their return to work. This is crucial in ensuring that participants' employing institutions maximise the benefit of the investment made in and by their staff.

7.3.6   Our fieldwork also revealed that practitioners became more confident in using Welsh for professional purposes having participated in the NPTP, with those making most use of the language at work generally claiming to be most confident. Indeed, there appeared to be what might be thought a rather predictable 'bootstrapping' effect at play, whereby increased confidence bred increased usage, which in turn bred more confidence and so forth. This apparently virtuous cycle again reinforces the need for careful planning to ensure that former participants have the opportunity to use Welsh upon their return to work, an argument further buttressed by the decline in confidence felt by practitioners who had not had much opportunity to use Welsh after completing the NPTP.

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[27] The number of participants (and thus survey respondents) working in WBL settings or as supply teachers prevented us from gaining anything but a rough impression of their situation before and after participation and our fieldwork, therefore, was essentially focused upon practitioners working in schools and the FE sector.

7.3.7   There was a strong sense that the increased confidence which practitioners had in their language skills was matched by a greater sense of confidence in their pedagogical skills. There was also evidence to suggest that former NPTP participants increased their involvement in Welsh medium extra curriculum activities.

7.3.8   Most practitioners produced at least five hours' worth of Welsh medium/ bilingual learning resources whilst on the NPTP and many had since gone on to produce more. In this context, there was some evidence that participation in the NPTP reduced practitioners' reliance upon colleagues (and thus generating efficiency gains) in producing Welsh medium/bilingual teaching/learning materials. There was also a suggestion that participation in the NPTP strengthened the ability of some practitioners from the primary sector to maximise the benefit derived from Athrawon Bro's input.

7.3.9   Finally. our fieldwork pointed to the NPTP's role in engendering an enthusiasm for Welsh medium/bilingual teaching among former participants, which in some instances, was said to infect others within their employing institutions. This is clearly an important effect if WAG's ambition to increase the supply of practitioners able and willing to teach and train through the medium of Welsh is to be met.

7.3.10   We close by touching upon the positive feedback we received from respondents to our survey and the former participants to whom we spoke about the quality of the teaching and support delivered by the NPTP teams at both Bangor and Cardiff Universities. It is notable that participants in part-time, distance learning courses (for whom a full time course was not generally an option) were equally complimentary about their experiences of the NPTP. Despite this, however, a disappointingly large proportion of survey respondents had failed to take advantage of the post course support offered, which we believe represents the loss of an opportunity to maintain momentum and to encourage former participants to promote the Programme to colleagues.

8. Recommendations

8.1   In this chapter, we present our recommendations, some of which echo recommendations made in the 2007 Evaluation Report.

Recommendation 1

8.2   DCELLS should continue to promote the Programme to potential applicants through a planned series of press-releases and advertorials in the regional and professional press as well as via the web-sites of relevant organisations (e.g. the NUT, Learning and Skills Observatory Wales etc).

Recommendation 2

8.3   In addition to promoting the Programme via the regional and professional media, a planned series of presentations should be given by the two university 'associates' retained by WAG to 'champion' the Programme. These presentations should be aimed at learning providers which are known to have plans to step up the volume of Welsh medium/bilingual provision they deliver as well as other 'influencers' of potential applicants. In this respect, the universities should prepare template presentations to ensure the consistency and quality of the presentations given.

Recommendation 3

8.4   The 'Application Form' should be revised so that the line managers of prospective participants are asked to set out:

- the baseline in terms of the volume of Welsh medium/bilingual teaching which the applicant practitioner undertakes prior to participation in the NPTP;

- details of the Welsh medium/bilingual teaching which the applicant practitioner is expected to undertake upon their completion of the NPTP: where this is not expected to differ in terms of volume, line managers should be asked to set out changes which they expect to see in the quality or depth of Welsh medium/bilingual teaching delivered;

- an outline of the teaching resources/materials to be produced by the applicant practitioner whilst on the NPTP and a brief discussion as to how these would be used;

- how changes in the volume or nature of Welsh medium/bilingual teaching undertaken fits into the institution's plans for the Welsh language;

- how line managers propose to support the applicant's on-going Welsh medium/bilingual teaching development upon their completion of the NPTP;

- how the training to be undertaken links into applicant practitioners' wider CPD plans; and

- how the line manager proposes to monitor changes that occur, linked to clear but simple milestones for doing so.

Recommendation 4

8.5 Where line managers foresee that applicants will only be able to make limited use of Welsh for teaching purposes upon completing the NPTP, they should be asked to set out what alternative arrangements they will put in place to provide applicants with opportunities to put into practice what they have learnt and, thus, to maintain momentum and confidence. Where line managers are unable to demonstrate that applicants' new skills will be put to good use, WAG should turn down applications.

Recommendation 5

8.6 Participants' line managers should also be asked, at the application stage, to commit to:

- ensuring that applicants avail themselves of three days' follow up support within two terms of completing the NPTP;

- providing WAG with a progress report upon the anniversary of the former participants' completion of the NPTP (based on the monitoring milestones discussed in Recommendation 3 above). These reports should touch upon:
  - the volume and percentage of the practitioner's teaching and assessment work undertaken through the medium of Welsh/bilingually;
  - the nature of follow-on development activity undertaken by the practitioner since completing the NPTP;
  - outline details of the Welsh medium/bilingual teaching which the practitioner is expected to undertake in the coming twelve months; and
  - outline details of plans to further support the practitioner's on-going Welsh medium/bilingual teaching development.

Recommendation 6

8.7 The Universities involved in the Programme's delivery should extend to three terms the period during which former participants are able to return for follow on support. This would allow former participants more time to find their feet upon their return to work and to recognise areas which they need help to develop further.

Recommendation 7

8.8 The cynllunsabothol.org web-site provides an ideal vehicle for maintaining contact with NPTP 'alumni' and resources should be made available to enable its use as an extranet which provides current and former participants with access to a range of information and resources as well as a offering them a discussion forum.

Recommendation 8

8.9   Periodic bulletins should be issued to former NPTP participants providing them with 'news' about the Programme, examples of other former participants' Welsh medium/ bilingual learning related achievements and highlighting developments in Welsh medium/bilingual teaching more generally. These bulletins should be distributed to former participants via e-mail and posted to the cynllunsabothol.org extranet referred to above.

Recommendation 9

8.10   Allied to this, examples of good practice (including those to emerge from progress reports provided by former participants' line managers – see Recommendation 3 above) should be documented and featured in the bulletins referred to at Recommendation 8 above, as well as distributed to target institutions as a means of promoting the Programme and of providing prospective applicants' line managers with an idea of the ways in which their staff and their institutions could benefit.

Recommendation 10

8.11   Whilst we accept that such resources are a useful by-product rather than an intended output of the NPTP, we endorse the recommendation made in the 2006/07 Evaluation Report that practitioners should be encouraged to 'network' with fellow practitioners to develop further materials and, thus, help them to maintain momentum and interest.