



Evaluation of the ESF Capacity Building Project for the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales

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Research

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Audience	Providers of education and training, awarding bodies, advice and guidance organisations, employers, learners and DCELLS policy, funding and planning departments.
Overview	The evaluation of the Community Learning Account pilot has involved individual evaluations of each pilot and a collective evaluation of the overall approach. This report presents the collective findings, distinguishing between the two pilots that ran in established organisations and the three pilots that were set up as new projects.
Action required	None.
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Additional copies	This report is available online at http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/research-and-evaluation/124540/?lang=en
Related documents	Evaluation of the Impact of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales.

Contents

	Page
Summary	2
Introduction	7
ESF Capacity Building Project	11
Achievement of Deliverables and Outcomes	17
Outputs from the Capacity Building Project	50
Outcomes from the ESF Capacity Building Project	55
Key Findings and Recommendations	58
Appendix 1 – NICATS Level Descriptors	69
References	73

Summary

Miller Research was commissioned in October 2007 to undertake an evaluation of the ESF Capacity Building Project with awarding bodies that was carried out by the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW).

The approach taken has primarily been desk-based, we have reviewed the final outputs of each capacity building project against the original contract aims and objectives for the work. The desk research has been supplemented by consultations with key individuals and organisations involved in the project.

The evaluation has focused on the work that has been carried out by the five awarding bodies involved (City and Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, WAMITAB¹, WJEC) plus SEMTA² and the Federation of Awarding Bodies.

There has been mixed progress against objectives within the ESF Capacity Building Project. Good progress towards achieving most of the outputs stated in the application form, although it must be noted that only one objective has been scored as 'fully achieved'. Evidence has not been seen to be able to confirm progress made with respect to credit transcripts for post-16 learning or the development of a single credit-unit database.

¹ The awarding body for the Waste Management industry

² Semta is the Sector Skills Council for science, engineering and manufacturing technologies in the UK.

Output	Achievement
Establish a process of agreement on credit values (units/modules and whole qualifications) for their own vocational and academic qualifications offered in and outside of the National Qualifications Framework;	Fully Achieved
Establish a process for agreement on a common value of credit for generic qualifications offered by different awarding bodies i.e. GCSE, A levels, AS levels, Key Skills, AVCE (Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education) and GNVQ;	Partially Achieved
Establish process for agreement on quality assurance arrangements for the ascribing and awarding of credit;	Partially Achieved
Develop materials to promote use of the framework and raise provider, employer and public awareness of opportunities facilitated through the framework; and	Partially Achieved
Investigate Management Information System requirements for the operation of the framework and design a system specification for ascribing and awarding credit.	Partially Achieved
Undertake development with Careers Wales Online regarding credit transcript for all post-16 learning	Not Evidenced
In conjunction with ACCAC (the Quality and Curriculum Authority for Wales) specify and undertake development of a single credit unit database;	Not Evidenced

In general good progress has been made against the outcomes expected from the ESF Project. Linked to the outputs above, the only areas where there has been limited progress is with respect to the credit transcript and the credit database.

Outcome	Achievement
Publishing credit values for Awarding Bodies own qualifications	Good Progress
Publishing credit values for generic qualifications offered by a number of awarding bodies	Good Progress
Signing up to the Credit Common Accord and agree Quality Assurance procedures for credit	Good Progress
Raising awareness of and flexibility of credit and qualifications systems with providers, learners and companies.	Limited Progress
Supporting ACCAC single credit unit database	No Evidence
Supporting Careers online learner transcript programme	No Evidence

The key success of the ESF project has been getting the buy-in of awarding bodies in the development of the Framework, whilst this has consequences for the speed of progress; there was general consensus that the partnership working with awarding bodies and other organisations has been a success.

All awarding bodies consulted enjoyed their experience in working on the ESF project, although there are some concerns that the experience and knowledge gained from participation in the project has not been embedded into the day-to-day operations of awarding bodies.

A number of areas have been highlighted for improvement through the ESF evaluation. This includes the availability of information on the studies; the evaluation has been complicated due to difficulties securing the original specifications or objectives for studies or complete copies of final documents submitted to the CQFW team. This has meant that some of the ESF works could not be evaluated.

The fairly loose specifications that awarding bodies were working from which has resulted in deviations from the specifications and also uncertainty for the evaluators over the agreed specifications for the work. In addition, there was considerable variation in the quality of the final reports from awarding bodies with some reports not providing adequate evidence of the approach, processes and issues arising through the research.

However, we do recognise that the CQFW team has suffered considerable disruption and upheaval through several staff changes, departmental reorganisations and the merger of ELWa and ACCAC into the Welsh Assembly Government. This has undoubtedly impacted on the systems and processes of CQFW and also the team's capacity to carry out these 'administrative' requirements as well as developing of the Framework.

The other area for improvement for CQFW is regarding information sharing/marketing. Whilst there is praise for the standard of information sharing and collaboration amongst those closely involved in the development of the CQFW, there needs to be improvements to the information that is available for individuals outside of the development partners who want to find out more about it. Currently it is only through attending a CQFW event that these individuals could find out about the Framework which may be more detail than they require. We therefore suggest that improvements are made to the CQFW website so that there is a clear and transparent way of sharing information with interested parties. Other cost-effective mechanisms could be an email newsletter.

The evaluation has highlighted the following key successes of the ESF project and the CQFW in general

- Achieving the objective of developing capacity within the awarding bodies who participated in the project
- Achieving 'buy-in' and support for the CQFW from the main awarding bodies
- Assigning credit values to a number of awarding body qualifications and general qualifications

Recommendations for the future development of CQFW are:

1. Ensure appropriate systems are maintained for future projects to ensure that there is a full record of the work that has been undertaken and so that the conclusions and research findings can be drawn on in the future and utilised in evaluation exercises.
2. Ensure that future projects have clear SMART objectives, targets and outputs where possible, and that any amendments are clearly documented and available for evaluation exercises.
3. Ensure that final outputs are an accurate record of the work undertaken, results and issues arising through improvements to monitoring and management procedures. Reports should be written in a style so that other parties can learn from the

experience and to demonstrate transparency in the development of the Framework.

4. To encourage awarding bodies and other recognised bodies to embed the requirements of the CQFW within their internal processes so that all relevant members of the organisation can assign credit and levels to units.
5. CQFW should look to work with influential employers or organisations to provide practical examples or case studies of the benefits of the Framework
6. There is a need to improve the methods of communicating progress on the Framework with external stakeholders - those who are outside the development of the Framework but have an interest in it.
7. A thorough overhaul should be carried out on the CQFW website so it can act as a useful marketing tool for the Framework and also keep stakeholders informed of progress and developments.
8. For the Welsh Assembly Government and HEFCW to undertake a strategic review of the Framework to determine whether or not to continue with its development. If Wales is to continue with the CQFW it needs to have strategic direction and visible support both politically and operationally.

Introduction

Miller Research was commissioned in October 2007 to undertake an evaluation of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW). The stated aims for this research were to:

- Evaluate the effectiveness, impact and value for money of the CQFW project to date; and
- Evaluate the ESF Capacity Building Project with awarding bodies

This report seeks to evaluate the ESF Capacity Building Project that has been undertaken by CQFW, a report into the effectiveness and impact of the CQFW to date is presented separately.

Methodology

The approach taken to evaluate the ESF Capacity Building project has primarily been desk-based, we have reviewed the final outputs of each capacity building project against the original contract aims and objectives for the work. The desk research has been supplemented by consultations with key individuals and organisations involved in the project.

The evaluation has focused on the work that has been carried out by the five awarding bodies involved (City and Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, WAMITAB³, WJEC) plus SEMTA⁴ and the Federation of Awarding Bodies.

Background⁵

The concept of credit has been in development in Wales for nearly 20 years. In this time there has been the CREDIS Project along with development of credit in Higher Education and also credit development through the Open College Network (OCN).

In July 2001, the then Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning, committed Wales to having a single credit-based qualification framework operational by April 2003.

The purpose of such a credit-based framework is to encourage more young people and adults in Wales to participate in learning. A credit framework enables small learning achievements (credits)

³ The awarding body for the Waste Management industry

⁴ Semta is the Sector Skills Council for science, engineering and manufacturing technologies in the UK.

⁵ Section 1 of the Credit Works (2005) report "Learning from Experience – A comparative Analysis of Awarding Body Credit Practice within the CQFW"

to be formally recognised. The learner can accumulate credits in order to gain recognised qualifications.

All accredited learning for post 14 year olds in Wales is being gradually brought into a single structure – the CQFW. The CQFW embraces all post-14 learning and Higher Education in Wales and has been established jointly by:

- Welsh Assembly Government – Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills. Specifically the Qualifications and Curriculum Division (formerly ACCAC – Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales) and Lifelong Learning and Skills (formerly ELWa); and
- Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

The CQFW underpins five key goals:

- Enabling everyone to develop and maintain essential skills;
- Encouraging people to become lifelong learners;
- Exploiting the knowledge in businesses and educational institutions;
- Encouraging businesses and workers to gain new skills; and
- Helping people within their communities to develop new skills.

The CQFW allows learners to explain to others the relative value of their award, to transfer their knowledge and skills between career paths, providers and countries.

Employers gain a means of comparing the value of applicants' and employees' achievements and a clear way of expressing the skills and qualifications applicants need.

CQFW has worked with awarding bodies and key stakeholders to develop the policy, principles and processes to make the CQFW a working concept. In 2003 the Credit Common Accord Forum was produced which formalised the forum of key individuals and organisations to agree on terminology, design specifications, principles and systems required to ensure that the currency of assigned and awarded credit is fully quality assured.

Over the last seven years the CQFW Team in partnership with awarding bodies and other organisations has tested the principles of credit in a wide range of projects covering Higher Education, regulated qualifications, informal and non-formal learning.

The Framework⁶

The CQFW was launched in 2003 and brings all recognised learning into a single unifying structure. The framework merges the concepts of learning achievements (credit) and the demands made by that learning on the learner (level) to create a system that is able to embrace all types and styles of learning and all qualifications.

Credit is

- a currency for learning achievement that provides a measure of learning outcomes achievable in learning time at a given level; and
- an award made to learners in recognition of the verified achievement of designated learning outcomes at a specified level

One credit equates to learning outcomes achievable in 10 hours of learning time, which is in line with the approach taken in other credit frameworks across the UK.

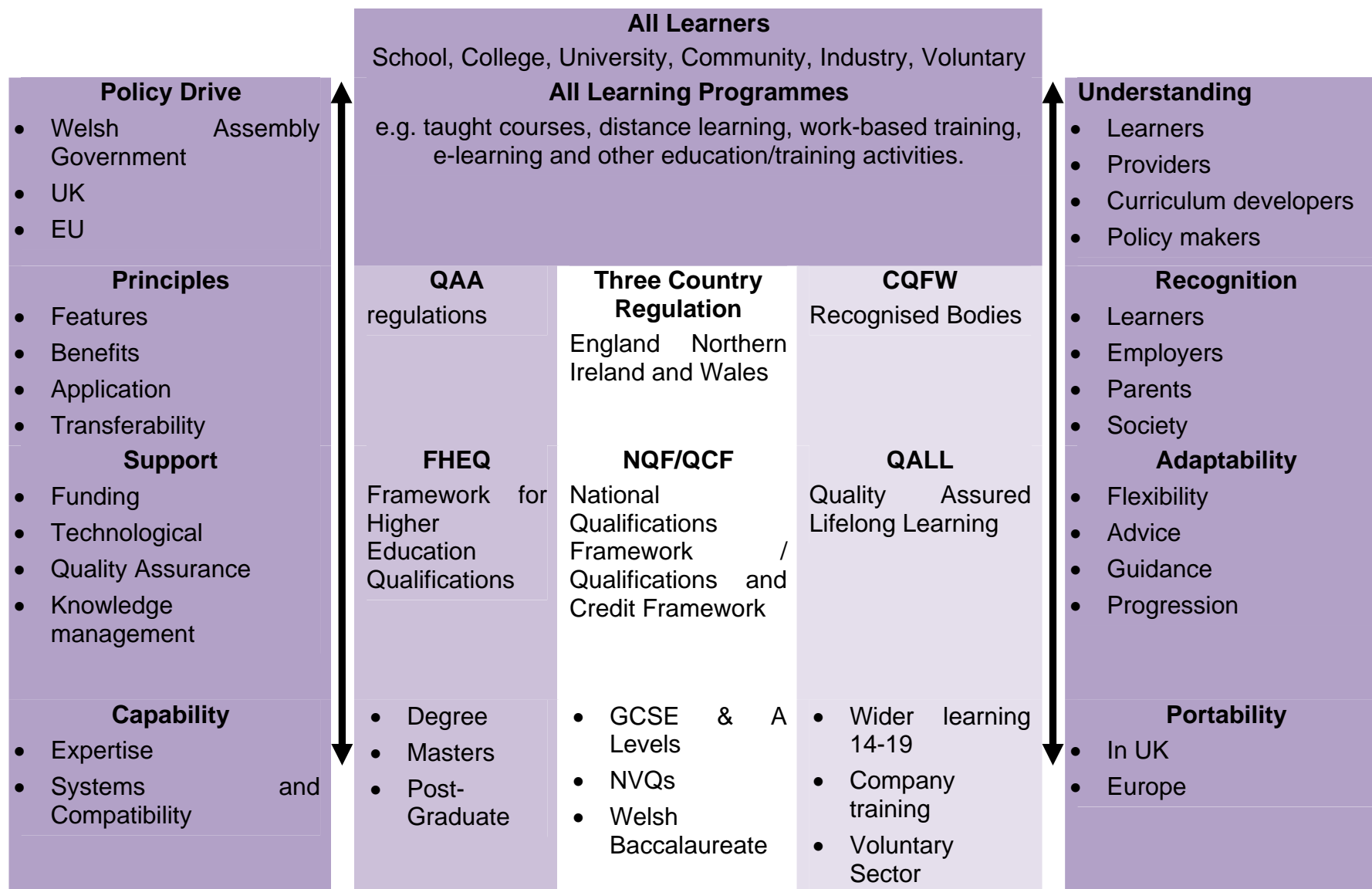
Levels are used to indicate the level of demand, complexity and depth of study. The descriptors are accepted across Wales, Northern Ireland and England and ensure that any unit can be located at the correct level⁷.

The CQFW is designed to be an inclusive model in that it looks to incorporate all kinds of learning, whether formal, regulated learning (such as qualifications included in the NQF), work-based learning or informal and non-formal learning.

⁶ Credit and Learning in Wales – An Introduction (2007)

⁷ CQFW uses the NICATS level descriptors (see Appendix 1)

Figure 1: Illustration of the CQFW



ESF Capacity Building Project

Introduction

In March 2003 the CQFW team submitted an application to the European Commission for funding from the European Social Fund (ESF). Two applications were made, one under Objective 1, Priority 4 Measure 3 and one under Objective 3, Priority 3 Measure 1. The aim of the ESF project was to support the capacity building of a credit framework with the main awarding bodies.

The ESF funding was used to develop the CQFW through building capacity within awarding bodies by enabling them to ascribe credit values to total qualifications and individual units. In addition, the funding was used by awarding bodies to amend their internal systems to include awarding credit values onto their student transcript and internal records.

Specifically, the project application form stated that the project will:

“...meet the costs, through contracts between NC-ELWa and the main qualifications awarding bodies for the programme area, of the development work undertaken internally by those awarding bodies, that will allow them (and incentivise them) to ascribe credit to their own qualifications in an agreed, transparent and consistent manner, and in doing so substantially help NC – ELWa and Welsh Assembly Government achieve its strategy to develop a single, credit based qualification framework for Wales.”

In addition the ESF money would be used to

- Pay consultants to input specialist advice and expertise
- Improve the dissemination of information about the project and the developing Credit and Qualifications Framework; and
- Pay for infrastructural elements of the project, such as the development of an awarding body credit and qualifications database.

The project would be carried out by the CQFW team at ELWa (now DCELLS within the Welsh Assembly Government) and also five awarding bodies in England and Wales, namely:

- Edexcel Foundations
- WJEC
- City and Guilds
- OCR
- WAMITAB

The Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) and SEMTA were also involved in the project.

Objective 1 Application

CQFW submitted their application under Priority 4 Measure 3 – ‘Lifelong Learning for all’. This measure looks to support the National Learning Strategy for Wales set out in *The Learning Country* Green Paper and the *National Targets for Education and Training*, which have been endorsed by the National Assembly, and seeks to widen participation in lifelong learning.

The aims and objectives of this measure are:

- Support the development of a culture of lifelong learning in West Wales and the Valleys and to increase and widen participation in learning.
- Increase access to information and guidance services on learning.
- Provide people with the basic skills and confidence to continue learning.
- Increase, develop and support lifelong learning initiatives aimed at developing vocational and generic skills, including ICT.
- Improve the planning and delivery of lifelong learning and to develop better integration between different methods of delivery and particular points of transition.
- Upgrade the capabilities of practitioners to deliver lifelong learning opportunities to all.

The CQFW project sought to

“Build capacity for the Credit and Qualifications Framework with the main awarding bodies in the Objective 1 programme area in order to ascribe and award credit values to learning programmes

resulting in the support of learning progression as explicitly set out in the SPD P4M3 (Developing People)”⁸

The application stated that the CQFW will contribute to the strategic aims of the Objective 1 Measure 4.3 by

“supporting the Welsh Assembly Government policy of increasing employability and economic potential through skills development and training (Skills and Employment Action Plan, 2002). The CQFW will enable greater flexibility in education and training provision, making it more accessible to those previously excluded by time constraints, including employees of SMEs and those with family commitments.”⁹

The application also draws attention to the Single Programming Document which states

“The measure will support the development of new quality systems, including a single credit based qualifications framework, which recognises and supports informal and non-accredited learning and supports progression”¹⁰

The application was for a £701,722 project which sought £347,492 ESF funds over three years (2003 – 2005).

Objective 3 Application

CQFW submitted their application under Priority 3 Measure 1 – ‘Developing new or improved guidance and learning systems’. This measure looks to improve arrangements for the provision of quality, accessible guidance and advice on learning opportunities which encompass skills and knowledge for life and working life, as well as appropriate pre-training and pre-employment preparation actions.

This measure also looked to promote the formal recognition of all learning regardless of whether it is achieved informally in the community, through self study, by remote learning, through work based learning, or through taught educational provision. It aimed to allow learners to gain credit for small amounts of learning that suits their purposes at a particular point in time. Such credits may be accumulated towards other credit-based qualifications subject to specific rules of combination with an accreditation infrastructure specifically geared to encouraging and supporting Lifelong Learning.

The aim of this measure is:

⁸ CQFW Objective 1 ESF Project Application

⁹ CQFW Objective 1 ESF Project Application

¹⁰ West Wales and the Valleys Objective 1 Single Programming Document (September 2004)

“To develop and promote new or improved guidance, education and training systems and forms of learning, and to encourage participation in lifelong learning to improve access to the labour market, improve and sustain employability, and to promote job mobility.”

The specific objectives to support this aim were:

- to support the National Learning Strategy for Wales and key policy developments in Lifelong Learning.
- to encourage more people to access advice, guidance and information, about education and training opportunities.
- to promote and improve the provision of information, guidance and advice on lifelong learning opportunities.
- to improve planning and delivery structures for Lifelong Learning, with a particular emphasis on partnership approaches.
- to raise the levels of basic skills, especially literacy, numeracy and ICT in the East Wales labour market;
- to increase and widen participation in learning, particularly for excluded groups and low paid workers, and to provide second chances to enter the learning system, for people (including school leavers) with no or low qualifications
- to widen choice and levels of participation by overcoming barriers to learning.
- to encourage people to pursue further learning, to strive for higher levels of attainment and to work towards a target of the majority of young people in East Wales achieving at least Level 3 qualifications.
- to increase the number of East Wales graduates who go on to post graduate programmes which bring a vocationally specific added value to their skills levels, especially where relevant to the East Wales economy;
- to ensure that learning opportunities are relevant and accessible and meet the needs of individuals, communities and businesses.
- to support learning progression through the development of a comprehensive credit based qualifications framework which is recognisable and transferable within and outside East Wales;
- to improve systems for evaluating learning in order to improve effectiveness and quality of systems.

The project sought to

“Build capacity for the Credit and Qualifications Framework with the main awarding bodies in the East Wales Objective 3 programme area in order to ascribe and award credit values to learning programmes resulting in the support of learning progression as explicitly set out in the OP Policy Context Ch4”¹¹

The application stated that the CQFW will contribute to the strategic aims of the Objective 3 Measure 3.1 by

“supporting the Welsh Assembly Government policy of increasing employability and economic potential through skills development and training (Skills and Employment Action Plan, 2002). The CQFW will enable greater flexibility in education and training provision, making it more accessible to those previously excluded by time constraints, including employees of SMEs and those with family commitments.”¹²

The application also draws attention to the Policy Context Chapter (Chapter 4) of the Operational Plan for East Wales which sets out the main elements of the National Learning Strategy for Wales and refers to a *“single, flexible, credit-related qualifications framework spanning all learning post-16.”* The application also highlights references to a credit-based qualifications system in the Programme Complement.

The application was for a £467,814 project which sought £210,516 ESF funds over three years (2003 – 2005).

Outputs

The main outputs of the project as stated in the application form are that the main unitary qualification awarding bodies (including WJEC) which represent 80% of ELWa funded provision in Wales within Further Education and Work Based training will:

- Establish a process of agreement on credit values (units/modules and whole qualifications) for their own vocational and academic qualifications offered in and outside of the National Qualifications Framework;
- Establish a process for agreement on a common value of credit for generic qualifications offered by different awarding bodies i.e. GCSE, A levels, AS levels, Key Skills, AVCE (Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education) and GNVQ;

¹¹ CQFW Objective 3 ESF Project Application

¹² CQFW Objective 3 ESF Project Application

- Undertake development with Careers Wales Online regarding credit transcript for all post-16 learning;
- In conjunction with ACCAC (the Quality and Curriculum Authority for Wales) specify and undertake development of a single credit unit database;
- Establish process for agreement on quality assurance arrangements for the ascribing and awarding of credit;
- Develop materials to promote use of the framework and raise provider, employer and public awareness of opportunities facilitated through the framework; and
- Investigate Management Information System requirements for the operation of the framework and design a system specification for ascribing and awarding credit.

The results of the above activities were stated to make very substantial progress in:

- Publishing credit values for Awarding Bodies' own qualifications;
- Publishing credit values for generic qualifications offered by a number of awarding bodies;
- Supporting Careers online learner transcript programme;
- Supporting ACCAC single credit unit database;
- Signing up to the Credit Common Accord and agree Quality Assurance procedures for credit; and
- Raising awareness of and flexibility of credit and qualifications systems with providers, learners and companies.

ESF funds were used to help to support a number of projects with the awarding bodies to help to make the CQFW an operational model and so support the lifelong learning agenda within Wales.

Achievement of Deliverables and Outcomes

Introduction

As discussed above, five awarding bodies were appointed to the ESF Project to develop their own systems and processes to eventually ascribe and award credit to learners in Wales. The two-year project commenced in January 2004 and was extended in 2006 to allow a second 'wave' of activity to further develop the project.

Awarding Bodies on the project were identified by their unique position within the educational qualifications market place in Wales, their commitment to developing credit systems and the large scale impact that these awarding bodies will have on the development of the CQFW. The development of Welsh language programmes and environmental programmes were also highlighted as priority areas.

The issues arising from the developments of credit systems were shared with the Joint Council for Unitary Awarding Bodies, Federation of Awarding Bodies, Sector Skills Development Agency, Regulatory Authorities and others to facilitate greater understanding of the CQFW and its development throughout the UK.

In evaluating the extent to which the awarding bodies have achieved their objectives, reference has been made to the final document produced by each organisation, supplemented by consultations with key project staff at each awarding body.

Edexcel Capacity Building Work

Within the Edexcel Contract the following statement is made regarding the 'Description of Work'.

"Edexcel intends during the project to develop its expertise in assigning and awarding credit across the range of its qualifications portfolio through a number of exemplar projects in order to identify the changes needed to our systems and processes to ascribe and award credit to learners in Wales across our provision.

Edexcel will develop these exemplar projects initially with the BTEC portfolio, both within and outside the National Qualifications Framework, as the design principles for the qualifications rests with Edexcel. Edexcel plan to include credit in any General Qualifications pilot qualifications developed for

first teaching in September 2005. They hope to include the ascribing and award of credit to an NVQ as an exemplar project in agreement with the Sector Skills Council and City and Guilds.”

The elements listed in the table below form the ‘exemplar projects’ that Edexcel expected to complete for this contract and also the additional works that Edexcel were contracted to carry out. The Edexcel Report ‘Edexcel Final Report to CQFW’ (January 2007) has been used to evaluate Edexcel’s achievement of the contracted objectives.

Contracted Specification	Achievement
<p>BTEC Qualifications – to revise/rewrite NQF BTEC Qualifications in some sectors to carry credit from September 2004. This activity will allow Edexcel to develop a full understanding of the requirements related to the assigning of credit within the CQFW that can be carried across the whole BTEC Firsts and Nationals portfolio</p> <p>The project will include the assessment and quality assurance requirements that will allow for the award of credit to units either as ‘stand-alone units’ or within the qualification. It is intended that this would reflect the Revised Regulations expected to be published by the Regulators in March 2004.</p>	<p>Fully achieved</p> <p>107 units from 13 qualifications were revised/rewritten so that they could carry credit.</p>

<p>BTEC Customised Framework – to work with centres in Wales in order to develop guidance for centres on the process for ensuring proper allocation of hours and level to vocational criterion referenced qualifications. This will enable staff in Welsh centres to develop units capable of carrying credit when making submissions of centre-devised qualifications to Edexcel for approval as part of our BTEC Customised Framework. Credit will be assigned by Edexcel when these qualifications are approved. These submissions will need to support the valid award of credit following assessment and quality assurance. Edexcel will review and possibly revise its quality assurance arrangements to allow for unit award of credit.</p>	<p>See below</p>
<p>This exemplar project will have two strands – the first will be to work with centres in Wales as they develop qualifications to meet local needs for delivery in 2004/5. This will allow Edexcel to develop the guidance to centres by the end of 2004, monitor its use and review and revise it accordingly in 2005. Edexcel will analyse the use made of credit in these customised qualifications e.g. target markets and include this as part of our final report.</p>	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Edexcel only worked with one centre, whilst the contract implies they would work with more than one. Documentation was not seen which would confirm that Edexcel had the agreement of CQFW to only work with one centre.</p> <p>The contract implies that Edexcel were required to develop guidance material to assist the centre in developing credit based units, the report is not clear as to whether this was produced and whether it was reviewed and revised accordingly in 2005.</p> <p>The centre has developed 43 units but these have not as yet</p>

	<p>been submitted for approval onto the BTEC customized short course framework.</p> <p>As these units are not currently in use by learners, Edexcel could not analyse the use made of credit in these customised qualifications</p>
<p>The second strand is to work with a school in Newport LEA to develop a credit based qualification for use by post 16 students in the light of the impending withdrawal of GNVQs. Edexcel wish to understand whether or not there are any differences in the ascribing and awarding of credit in a school situation.</p>	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>The BTEC First Diploma in Vocational Studies/BTEC First Certificate in Vocational Studies was developed by Edexcel with staff from St Julian's School in Newport. Credit was assigned to 12 existing BTEC units in five subject areas. Students then chose up to six units to study. Students were awarded either a diploma or a certificate depending on the number of units completed. The project was deemed a success and was supported by the Welsh Assembly Government</p> <p>Edexcel do not report directly on whether there are any differences in the ascribing and awarding of credit in a school situation which is why this element of the contract has been scored as 'partially achieved'.</p>
<p>NVQ in Using IT – it is proposed to work with City and Guilds, OCR and e-skills SSC with a view to the assigning and awarding of credit to candidates in Wales. A new approach to NVQs is currently being piloted and includes an embryo credit framework and mutual recognition of units gained in a range of IT qualifications. The aim of this project would be to</p>	<p>Not Evidenced</p> <p>The Edexcel final report does not make any comment on whether or not they have been involved in this project and what their experience/findings has been.</p>

work with e-skills SSC to refine the current credit proposals to bring these in line with the CQFW requirements. An initial approach has been welcomed by e-skills SSC.	
<p>General Qualifications – Each year Edexcel undertakes a number of pilots which explore new approaches to regulated qualifications, usually General Qualifications. The pilot qualifications for delivery from September 2005 will be agreed in the summer of 2004 and it is intended that some of these qualifications (depending on the nature of the pilots proposed) should be developed to be credit based.</p>	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Pilot qualifications have not been developed to be credit based.</p> <p>Meetings have been held to discuss how credit values could be assigned to units of General Qualifications. Some initial ideas have been proposed for General Qualifications.</p> <p>Edexcel were subsequently commissioned to undertake additional work on general qualifications which has been evaluated separately</p>
<p>IT Developments – This strand of the Edexcel project will review our IT systems and to ascertain the changes necessary to track and monitor the assigning and award of credit to BTEC and NVQ qualifications. Edexcel shall also review the IT systems associated with our General Qualifications which make use of a different IT platform and produce an initial report on the changes necessary to include credit in these qualifications</p>	<p>Partially achieved.</p> <p>In the final report Edexcel discuss the approach they have taken with respect to ascertaining the changes that may be necessary in order to track and monitor the award of credit.</p> <p>They report that they can now notify students of their achievement of credit and that credit can be recognized in their Oracle System.</p> <p>They do not report on changes that would be needed to the IT system associated with General Qualifications to include credit in these qualifications.</p>
Additional Works	
Strand 1: Work on systems - Carried forward from Stages 4	<p>Not Achieved</p> <p>The only comment regarding</p>

<p>and 5 of the original project</p> <p>Liaison with internal IT and entries and registration staff to consider the impact of awarding the Welsh Baccalaureate on other awarding bodies.</p> <p>Meetings with WJEC IT and qualifications staff to understand processes and systems needed to recognise credit/achievement across awarding bodies to enable WJEC to award Welsh Baccalaureate Diploma.</p> <p>Production of a report with action points by 31st July 2006</p>	<p>the impact of the Welsh Baccalaureate on IT systems and other awarding bodies was that there is no system to enable transfer of credit from one awarding body to another which will cause problems if the WJEC is required to produce a single transcript for students on the Welsh Baccalaureate Diploma. This is because the Diploma may be made up of a number of qualifications that have been awarded by other UK awarding bodies including Edexcel.</p> <p>Edexcel have not produced a report with action points.</p>
<p>Strand 2: Production of final report - Carried forward from Stage 5 of original project</p> <p>Preparation of a final report to include all strands of work except collaborative work on General Qualifications, for submission by 31st July 2006.</p> <p>Liaison with Coleg Sir Gar, Coleg Menai, Yale, Bridgend, Coleg Gwent, Neath Port Talbot, St Julian's School</p> <p>Attendance at steering group meetings CQFW Implementation Group</p> <p>Liaison with stakeholders</p>	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>A final report has been produced for all the strands of work. The work on General Qualifications is reported separately (see strand 3 below)</p>
<p>Strand 3: General Qualifications Carried forward from original project and further development.</p> <p>To make recommendations to Joint Council for Qualifications in collaboration with other awarding bodies concerning the methodology to be adopted for assigning credit to general</p>	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>Edexcel's report 'Assigning Credit to AS and A level Qualifications' states that they have worked with other JCQ Awarding Bodies to develop a model for assigning credit to general qualifications.</p> <p>The report clearly recommends</p>

<p>qualifications</p> <p>Liaison with awarding bodies and Joint Council to plan and carry out further work on assigning credit to general qualifications; general qualifications here to GCE Advanced and Advanced Subsidiary Levels</p> <p>Liaison with other awarding bodies to agree methodology/recommendations</p> <p>Analysis of impact of revised GCE Advanced Level and Advanced Subsidiary Criterion credit values</p> <p>Identification of clusters of subjects to measure and consultants to take part to inform the research. Consultants will have expertise in A level and Advanced Subsidiary and will understand the 14-19 scene – some will also be teaching the particular qualifications</p> <p>Preparation of a report containing key findings and recommendations by August 31 2006</p>	<p>using a model that assigns 24 Credits for AS qualifications and 30 credits for A2 qualifications, leading to 54 credits for the A level.</p> <p>The work highlights the challenges and issues encountered in assigning credit to general qualifications.</p>
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Summary and Conclusions

Edexcel have made good progress on the objectives that they were set by CQFW, however there are several areas within their study where they appear to deviate from the specified objectives. There are four areas of work within the original contract with Edexcel that have only been 'partially achieved' as the reporting does not fully link back to the objectives. It could have been that these deviations had been agreed and discussed with CQFW in which case it would be recommended that this is documented in some way.

There are two areas which have been scored as 'not evidenced' – the NVQ in Using IT joint work with other Awarding Bodies and work on the IT systems for the Welsh Baccalaureate. We cannot be clear as to the status of this work at the time of their reporting.

Given the nature of the capacity building project and that the final deliverable is in report form, it would have been helpful to have the progress of these strands of work documented.

It appears from the documentation received that Edexcel did not fulfill all of the requirements in their original contract and so were engaged again under 'additional work' in order to finish the work.

City and Guilds Capacity Building Project

The City and Guilds work plan/objectives is set out in the table below, along with the level of achievement for each element. In evaluating the progress of City and Guilds reference has been made to their final report 'Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales: Building Capacity' (December 2006)

Contracted Specification	Achievement
Phase 1: On receipt of contract	
Review of work undertaken so far on credit, for instance the joint paper between City & Guilds and NOCN and pilot activity, and confirmation of the quality assurance processes to be used.	<p>Not evidenced</p> <p>The City and Guilds report does not report on any preliminary work that was carried out to research existing work on Credit.</p> <p>There is no reporting of the quality assurance processes to be used.</p>
Take into consideration pilot activity in England with LSC, QCA and progress achieved within the SCQF along with close liaison with CCEA in N Ireland. Internal discussions and agreement with ELWa Project Reference Group on the City & Guilds sectors and qualifications to be involved in the project. Identification of the key external partners in Wales and in UK organisations.	Not evidenced
Phase 2: April 2004	
Establish the City & Guilds sector working groups to	Fully Achieved

include, as advisors: SSC and Wales representatives.	The report sets out on page 5 the members of City and Guilds and the SSCs involved in the project
Identification and initial development of internal processes that will need to be addressed in order to <i>assign</i> credit to City & Guilds qualifications.	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>City and Guilds report how they took existing qualifications and analysed them into coherent units.</p> <p>It perhaps would have been beneficial for there to be slightly more detail on their processes and any challenges they faced</p>
Agree the process for assigning credit level and value to units for IT NVQ with other awarding bodies as first priority.	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>City and Guilds report that they worked with OCR, Edexcel and eSkills to analyse the ICT User NVQ. They do not specify the approach that was taken in this joint work. However, as credit has been assigned to these units and approved by the QCA we can assume this element of the work was fully completed</p>
Phase 3: April 2004	
Establish central administration working group to identify and implement the systems changes needed to <i>award</i> credit to City & Guilds units.	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>A central administration working group was established</p>
Phase 4: April 2004	
Establish central operations group to review the requirements within City & Guilds for a database for credit units and suitability for SOLAR (new internal database). This group will also investigate the requirements of a database that can be used across Awarding Bodies and to work with other Awarding Bodies to address these needs.	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>The Central Operations group have ensured that credit is recorded within SOLAR and certificates can be generated for centres in Wales that use credit rated units</p> <p>The report does not document whether any investigations were carried out regarding the requirements of a database that</p>

	can be used across Awarding Bodies.
Phase 5: May 2004 – December 2005	
Sector based working groups, carry out the analysis and prepare units to a common framework addressing content, level, volume, assessment, prerequisites and progression. Working closely with other awarding bodies.	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>The report does not specify how units were analysed in order to prepare them ready to assign credit.</p> <p>The report could benefit from more detail to explain the framework that was used across the strands to address content, level, volume, assessment, prerequisites and progression.</p> <p>The report does not specify if City and Guilds worked with other awarding bodies.</p>
This activity, to assign credit, will be undertaken in consultation with learners and centres in Wales.	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>City and Guilds assigned credit to 119 units in 14 qualifications. They were not able to develop credit rated units in the retail strand of activity.</p> <p>City and Guilds do not document whether the work was carried out in consultation with learners and centres in Wales. They do report however that events were held to publicise the work on Credit and to share views and practical issues on implementation to which centres were invited.</p>
This phase will include the development of combination rules which allow units to be accumulated to gain qualifications.	<p>Not evidenced</p> <p>City and Guilds make some comment on the combination of units to gain qualifications (page 7) but there does not appear to be any evidence of the development of combination</p>

	rules.
The central administration working group will work alongside the sector groups to identify and address the administrative issues arising out of the work, and make recommendations for City & Guilds to develop appropriate administrative processes.	Not evidenced The report does not comment on any administrative issues arising from the project and
The central administration group will be responsible for developing the processes required to enable credit to be awarded for successful completion of units. It is intended that, as agreement on unit specifications is achieved in the sector groups the administrative group will ensure that learners are able to access appropriate recognition during the lifetime of this project.	Fully Achieved The Central Operations group have ensured that credit is recorded within SOLAR and certificates can be generated for centres in Wales that use credit rated units. It is not clear whether credits were awarded to learners during the lifetime of the project.
Develop modules of learning for product management team to assign credit and train City & Guilds staff in these processes.	Fully Achieved City and Guilds report that training has been given for City and Guilds staff and staff at centres. Two series of briefings were held for City and Guilds product development staff. A copy of materials used at the staff briefings has been included as an appendix to the report.
The central operations group will maintain contact with the sector and administrative working groups in order to establish the central database of units. This group will be responsible for completing the final project report, and any interim reports required,	Fully Achieved City and Guilds report that SOLAR staff have been ensuring credit-rated units are properly coded and managed within the system.

<p>At the conclusion of the project a detailed report will be prepared describing the units that have been developed. This will also include an evaluation of the process and recommendations on the rollout of units, including a publicity campaign.</p>	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>City and Guilds produced a comprehensive clear report that showed the units developed and the credit awarded to them. They highlighted the key issues experienced during the process and put forward recommendations for the further development of the CQFW; although there were some sections of the report which could have benefited from slightly more detail.</p> <p>However, the report does not include recommendations on the rollout of units, including a publicity campaign.</p>
<p>Additional Work</p>	
<p>Outputs. These consist of five strands of work, as listed below. All were to be undertaken between December 2005 and the end of July 2006.</p>	
<p>Strand 1: Basic Skills Teacher Training level 3.</p> <p>This is in partnership with the BSA who will also be providing support. The activity in this strand is to develop a bridging qualification for those who aspire to gain the level 4 qualification to be a basic skills teacher. The programme has been developed as a pilot by BSA, and the activity will be to develop units and assign credit levels and values to them. Initial drafts of units will be discussed with centres in Wales, and, based on the consultation, will be reviewed and completed. There are already 30 potential customers from 88 centres.</p>	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>The project worked in partnership with the BSA and analysed the content of the qualification into credit based units.</p>

<p>Strand 2: Airbus.</p> <p>Following an initial meeting with Airbus in Broughton, North Wales, in January 2006, this strand will identify in-house training programmes to be credit rated. Then we will identify appropriate C&G experts who can undertake the work of assigning level and credit ratings to units and complete it by June.</p>	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>The induction programme that Airbus uses for its apprentice engineers has been analysed into credit rated units in conjunction with Deeside College and Semta.</p>
<p>Strand 3: Swansea College</p> <p>This is to develop an in-house training programme that is credit-rated to sell to external customers. The work will start in the new year and a team of experts identified based on the curriculum areas that are required. Units will be developed and credit rated and trialled with customers identified by the college.</p>	<p>Not evidenced</p>
<p>Strand 4: Apprenticeship research</p> <p>This strand supports work being undertaken by Adrian Sheehan of ELWa, who is undertaking research into the possibilities of assigning credit to individuals who have not fully completed their Modern Apprenticeship frameworks. This would require ascribing credit to units within components of the Modern Apprenticeship framework, including NVQs, Technical Certificates and Key Skills.</p>	<p>Not Evidenced</p>
<p>Also, it would be necessary to investigate if Awarding Bodies held information on those candidates who have achieved unit certification towards a</p>	<p>Not Evidenced</p>

qualification.	
There are two curriculum areas that will be investigated – Health and Social Care and Business Administration.	Not Evidenced
Strand 5: ILM development This project has now reached the stage where credit rated units have been developed and discussed with providers. The units developed need to be approved by QCA, and this requires support from the relevant Standards Setting Body – the Management Standards Council. In addition support is needed for trialling the units with centres. This is an exercise that will need to take place across the first half of 2006.	Partially Achieved The team reorganised the qualification into the CQFW structure of units. The report does not state whether the units have been approved by QCA or whether there were support for the units through trials with centres.
Strand 6: Early Years The Early Years NVQ 3 qualification has already been credit rated based on the then specification. The specification has changed and we therefore need to update the units. The Early Years team needs to be reconvened to undertake this work. We also need to work with providers. In particular to review and revisit the work done by Coleg Llysfasi in getting student input to the process of allocating learning time.	Not Evidenced
Summary and Conclusions	
City and Guilds assigned credit to 119 units over 14 qualifications which covered nine different subject areas. In general, City and Guilds produced a good report which has provided the evidence that they achieved most of the objectives/tasks set out for them. There are some areas within their report which could benefit from more detail e.g. better explanation of the framework/processes	

used to assign credit or comments on whether they worked with other awarding bodies/learners during the study.

As specified in the additional works contract, City and Guilds were to look at six areas of work, however, there is no evidence within the report of work being carried out on:

Strand 3 – Swansea College

Strand 4 – Apprenticeship Research

Strand 6 – Early Years

Instead, City and Guilds report on work in Electrical/Electronic Servicing (Signal Reception) and Horticulture, which were not mentioned in either the original or additional work contracts. There is no discussion within the report as to why the scope of work has changed. For evaluation/audit purposes it would be beneficial to record why these changes occurred and whether they were agreed with the CQFW project team.

OCR

OCR were contracted to assign and award credit to their qualifications and also develop IT Systems to support credit. The table below sets out the different strands to their contract and the degree to which these have been achieved. Use of their final report 'Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales: Building Capacity – Final Report April 2004 – March 2006' has been used to assess the progress of OCR against their objectives.

Contracted Specification	Achievement
Strand 1 - Credit will be assigned to the units in the qualifications indicated above ¹³ .	Partially Achieved OCR report on the process that they applied and report that they assigned credit to all of the units within the qualifications listed in their report. However, there is no record within the report or within the CQFW Unit Database spreadsheet which makes it difficult for us to verify that credit was assigned to these units.

¹³ It should be noted that the documentation received by the evaluators from CQFW with respect to the OCR contract does not specify what the agreed qualifications were.

Strand 2 - An assignment process which is subject to independent scrutiny.	Fully Achieved The approach taken by OCR in having the consultants work in isolation to assign credit and then come together to discuss and agree the credit values results in a process that is clear, simple and transparent. OCR report that by using this method they were able to assign credit to all but one of the qualifications included in the project.
Strand 3 - OCR IT systems for holding qualification data and recording candidate achievement will be modified, where practical, to accommodate a credit value and level.	Fully Achieved OCR Report that they have now built capacity within the OCR database and awarding structures to store data about credit value of a unit; store data about the level of a unit; and store achievement of credit
Strand 3 - From December 2005 OCR will have the capability to award certificates to candidates successfully completing the selected units which show the credit achieved by the candidate.	Fully Achieved OCR has the capability to issue Unit Certificates which state the credit value against each unit. OCR include examples of the following results documents which now include credit values – certificates, cumulative specification reports, cumulative statement of results, statement of results, result slips and control reports.
Strand 3 - Candidates' credit achievement will be able to be transferred to other external databases, if required.	Not reported OCR do not report whether work was carried out on the transfer of credit achieved to external databases.
Strand 4 - OCR staff will be trained on relevant aspects of credit so that credit can be assigned to new qualifications during the development	Fully Achieved OCR report that a great deal of staff training was undertaken during the project. A number of briefing events and meetings

process, and to ensure that customer-facing staff can explain and promote the credit system to customers.	were held that aimed to increase the 'credit sense' of OCR staff, both those involved in qualifications development and also external assessment personnel who contribute to the development of qualifications.
Strand 4 - OCR customers (Centres and candidates) will receive information on credit.	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>OCR developed a communications plan in 2005; this gave short, medium and long term objectives for communicating messages about credit and the CQFW to OCRs customers. In the short term OCR have informed customers about their involvement in the ESF project through OCR News. In the medium to long term OCR anticipate issuing generic and more detailed materials which will reinforce credit principles and inform key stakeholders of technical information.</p>
Strand 4 - The project will be documented.	<p>Fully Achieved.</p> <p>OCR issued a comprehensive report which detailed their approach to assigning credit and the issues that they encountered during the process.</p> <p>They have put forward a number of points for CQFW to consider in order to further develop the framework.</p>
Summary and Conclusions	
OCR has achieved nearly all of the objectives that were set for them by CQFW with the exception of consideration of a database that will allow the sharing of credit information between awarding bodies. In addition, although OCR report to have assigned credit to all but one of the qualifications included in the ESF project, these have not been documented within the final report which means that we are not able to confirm that this work has been	

completed.

WAMITAB

In evaluating the progress of WAMITAB against the objectives stated below reference has been made to WAMITAB's final report¹⁴. It should be noted that this final report only documents progress made on Stage 5 at Milestone 4. It is understood that WAMITAB produced similar reports for each stage/milestone however the evaluators have not had sight of these reports in order to evaluate progress in the earlier stages.

Contracted Specification	Achievement
Stage 1:	
Review of work and agreements reached to date	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators
Confirmation of Quality Assurance processes	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators
Confirmation of Project Plan and link to other initiatives within and outside Wales	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators
Stage 2:	
To review internal processes, associated with the award of credit within WAMITAB's awarding body	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators
To determine the changes necessary to award credit to all qualifications	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators
To determine an appropriate mechanism to ascribe credit at unit level to all WAMITAB awards at Levels 1-4	Partially Achieved We only have a copy of the Milestone 4 report and therefore cannot verify whether activity under Milestone 1 has been achieved. We have been able to verify that WAMITAB have ascribed credit

¹⁴ WAMITAB Awarding Body – Capacity Building for the CQFW. Completion of Stage 5; Milestone 4 - March 2005. Ray Burberry.

	to their units and from this we are able to infer that previous stages such as determining a process to ascribe credit have gone ahead but it should be noted that we have no evidence to prove this inference.
Completion of Stage 1 and 2 reaches Milestone 1. Due date 31 May 2004.	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators We only have a copy of the Milestone 4 report and therefore cannot verify whether activity under Stages 1 and 2 have been achieved.
Stage 3:	
To identify the Learning Time in hours for each unit (147 Units)	Partially Achieved We have been able to verify that WAMITAB have ascribed credit to their units. We are able to infer that previous stages such as identifying Learning Time in hours have gone ahead but it should be noted that we have no evidence to prove this inference.
To identify the changes in WAMITAB's systems and procedures, to enable credit to be recorded against the needs of the individual learners for all qualifications.	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators
Completion of Stage 3 reaches Milestone 2. Due date 31 July 2004.	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators We only have a copy of the Milestone 4 report and therefore cannot verify whether activity under Milestone 2 has been achieved.
Stage 4:	
To identify the update requirements of WAMITAB's central computerised database to record each learners credit	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators

achievement.	
To investigate and identify the processes associated in assigning credit by WAMITAB and if appropriate across other Awarding Bodies	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators
To change the design of the NVQ and Unit certificates and agree with regulatory bodies the changes to reflect the ascribing of credit.	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>A copy of the revised Unit certificate is included as an appendix to the main report. There is not a copy of the NVQ certificate.</p> <p>There is no documentation as to whether these changes have been agreed with regulatory bodies.</p>
To field test the system over a 6-month period (off line) to ensure operating principles are met.	Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators
Completion of Stage 4 reaches Milestone 3. Due date 30 November 2004.	<p>Not Evidenced In Report Available to Evaluators</p> <p>We only have a copy of the Milestone 4 report and therefore cannot verify whether activity under Milestone 3 has been achieved</p>
Stage 5:	
To add credit values and level data to each qualification and the associated units	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>Although WAMITAB report that credit has been assigned to 149 units there is no formal record within the final report on the credit values assigned to these units. The credit values of these units are reported in CQFW's 'Unit Database Spreadsheet'.</p> <p>It would have been beneficial for the final credit values to have</p>

	been included in the final report.
To ascribe and award credit to learners in Wales	Fully Achieved WAMITAB comment that credit information is able to be presented on certificates for learners in Wales but do not comment on whether they are actually awarding credit to learners. However an appendix to the report includes a copy of a presentation given by WAMITAB which reports in the concluding summary that "Credit information added to Unit Certificates for Wales – 1 April 2005".
To change candidate data files to record and archive credit awarded	Not Evidenced
To produce marketing materials and guidance notes for Candidates, Assessors, Centres, IV's and EV's regarding the introduction and operation of the credit framework for the Waste Management Sector in Wales	Partially Achieved WAMITAB developed consultation material and presentations for SSCs, Awarding Bodies, External Verifier's and Centre staff. It does not appear that WAMITAB did any marketing of credit with candidates.
Completion of Stage 5 reaches Milestone 4. Due date 31 March 2005.	Partially Achieved WAMITAB produced a report for Milestone 4, but this report was very weak and did not provide adequate evidence of the work completed. It would have been beneficial to have brought the 3 earlier milestone reports into a comprehensive final report.
Summary and Conclusions	
WAMITAB should be congratulated at having assigned credit to 149 units through the ESF project. However, as the evaluators only had the Stage 5/Milestone 4 report it has not been possible to	

fully evaluate the approach, issues, finding and recommendations of the WAMITAB team. It is understood that separate reports were submitted to CQFW at the end of each stage however these have not been seen by the evaluators and so evaluation of work at earlier stages has not been possible. It would have been beneficial if WAMITAB had included their earlier reports as appendices to their final report, so that all stages of their work is recorded in a single document.

It is evident however, that WAMITAB have been sharing their experiences verbally with other awarding bodies and relevant organisations as letters of support from Energy and Utility Skills Ltd, Scottish Qualifications Authority, CABWI, City and Guilds and the Management Standards Centre are included in the appendices.

There are a number of documents included in the report appendices which demonstrate approach and consultation, however there is not sufficient narrative to explain what the documents are and what they evidence.

WAMITAB Additional Works

In 2005 WAMITAB were contracted to undertake additional works within the ESF capacity building project. They were required to ascribe credit levels and values for the new WRAP Recycling NVQ's at Levels 1 & 2 and two Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) in Advanced Waste Management Technologies, and Principles and Practices of Sustainable Wastes Management.

Contracted Specification	Achievement
Level 1 NVQ following evaluation, to assign Credit Value and Credit Level to 14 Units	Fully Achieved The appendices to the report document the credit values of the units in this qualification
Level 2 NVQ following evaluation, assign Credit Value and Credit Level to 23 Units	Fully Achieved The appendices to the report document the credit values of the units in this qualification
Following evaluation, to assign Credit Value and Credit Level to two VRQ's comprising 4 Units and 6 Units respectively	Not Evidenced We only have a copy of milestone 1 report. Progress on assigning credit to the VRQs is

	in the Milestone 2 report. We have not been able to source a copy of this report to be able to verify whether this work has been completed.
To submit credit information to CQFW database and commence award of credit for above qualifications from 1 August 2006	Not Evidenced
Summary and Conclusions	
<p>WAMITAB clearly report on their approach and methodology to assigning credit to these units and also document that their previous experience in the CQFW capacity building project has been beneficial in this work.</p> <p>As we only have a copy of the milestone 1 report, which only reports on the NVQ qualifications we have not been able to verify that the work on assigning credit values to VRQ's has been completed.</p>	

WJEC

WJEC worked on gaining experience and knowledge in assigning credit to the different components/elements of the Welsh Baccalaureate qualification.

Contracted Specification	Achievement
A WJEC IT system ready for the operational introduction of credit ascribing, awarding and reporting, with credit values in certain qualifications reported to candidates in the Summer of 2005.	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Credit values have been allocated to each component of the Welsh Baccalaureate Core, stored in the database and then used with each candidate's results to provide candidate certificates and centre achievement summaries which contain credit data.</p> <p>WJEC have considered the changes necessary to the IT systems for non-general qualifications (e.g. Welsh for Adults) and general</p>

	<p>qualifications. The IT system is not ready for the operational introduction of credit at this stage but WJEC have identified the stages they would need to implement to get their systems ready for credit.</p>
Systems for providing statistical summaries of credit values recorded.	Not evidenced
<p>Credit Values ascribed to the Welsh Baccalaureate Core and to certain WJEC qualifications, particularly those identified in pilot-centre students' Welsh Baccalaureate programmes. These will embrace two or three GCE Advanced subjects, two unit-based GCSE subjects and one not unit-based, two applied GCSE subjects, and two entry level subjects. (Need to check consistency with project plan) The aim will be to be in a position to award credit for a complete Welsh Baccalaureate programme for a small number of candidates;</p>	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>Credit was assigned to the Welsh Baccalaureate Core qualification and its component parts</p> <p>Credit values were either assigned to or confirmed for Welsh for Adults, Entry Level and GCE/GCSE.</p> <p>The work on IT Systems has enabled WJEC to be in a position to award credit to Welsh Baccalaureate learners.</p>
WJEC staff awareness of the matters arising, in design and operation, from the ascribing, awarding and reporting credit values of qualifications, the quality assurance issues arising therefrom, and the knowledge and awareness to deal with them;	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>Unlike other awarding bodies, WJEC do not formally report on training and awareness raising activities carried out with its staff. However, the process adopted by WJEC in assigning credit appears to have involved WJEC staff as much as possible (rather than using consultants to do the credit work). WJEC have also consulted widely on their work (with providers, awarding bodies etc.</p>
Experience in setting up systems for ascribing credit to	Fully Achieved

WJEC qualifications, in collaboration with ELWa and other Awarding Bodies, with a view to incorporating the ascription process into WJEC specification procedures and quality assurance systems;	
Summary and Conclusions	
<p>WJEC have submitted a very comprehensive report which fully explains the challenges and issues they encountered along with suggestions for revisions.</p> <p>WJEC have assigned credit to a number of different qualifications that are part of the WBQ and also to some WJEC qualifications.</p> <p>There are only two areas where WJEC have not fully achieved their objective – the first is with respect to the IT systems. WJEC can now award credit to each component of the WBQ Core, however, systems for non-general qualifications do not as yet have the capacity to award credit.</p> <p>The staff training and awareness component of the work is not formally reported on by WJEC. However, throughout the report it is clear that the project has involved a number of staff involved in qualification development and also external stakeholders such as centres and learners.</p>	

WJEC – Additional Work

Welsh For Adults

Following the Capacity Building work (discussed above), WJEC were contracted for additional work on the CQFW ESF Project. The work was designed to follow up recommendations from the project in which WJEC developed credit-based units at Entry Level for Welsh for Adults (WfA).

The work looked to:

- Develop and test electronic systems within WJEC and centres for recording and certificating credit for WfA.
- Evaluate impact of a credit-based WfA qualification on recording and assessment in centres
- Develop quality assurance procedures to support the award of credit within the new 'supra centre' arrangements for delivering WfA.

We do not have a copy of the report documenting this project. Therefore an evaluation of this work has not been possible.

Welsh Baccalaureate

This proposal follows up one of the recommendations from the Capacity Building project - to report the credit values assigned to the WBQ Core, both for individual candidates and in summary form for centres. It is likely that this will be limited to the curriculum components, whose values are determined by WJEC, whereas Key Skills standards are owned by the regulatory authorities and provided by a range of awarding bodies.

We do not have a copy of the report documenting this project. Therefore an evaluation of this work has not been possible.

SEMTA

SEMTA were contracted through City and Guilds to test and agree arrangements for inclusion of non-accredited company learning programmes onto the CQFW.

In evaluating the progress made by SEMTA in achieving the objectives set out above, reference has been made to SEMTA's final report¹⁵, it should be noted that we have not been able to source the appendices to the main report which form much of the evidence base regarding SEMTA's achievements.

Contracted Specification	Achievement
Identify learning programmes in collaboration with learning providers and employers;	Fully Achieved Learning programmes were identified in collaboration with Learning Providers and Employers. The project was marketed to Learning Providers and Employers who then submitted programmes for consideration for the CQFW. In total 33 bespoke demand-led learning programmes were submitted. These came from five companies directly and six learning providers that work with a number of companies.

¹⁵ The Transfer of Suitable Company Learning Programmes onto the CQFW (March 2006) Bill Peaper & Ken Toop

Pilot the learning programmes with employers, learning providers and employees;	Not Evidenced
Map the bespoke training programmes knowledge and know-how against the most relevant occupational standards, which define what people must know and how and where this knowledge must be applied. This combination of knowledge and know-how are the fundamental features of competency;	Partially Achieved The report comments that the mapping of units to occupational standards provides tangible links to accredited programmes/units which enables direct comparisons to be drawn. The report does not document whether all units were successfully mapped.
Size the bespoke training programme, which in essence is an estimation of learning time;	Partially Achieved The report indicates that learning time was estimated for the units through the feedback from conferences held etc. However, there is no evidence of the units that were assigned credit or what credit value was given.
Level the bespoke training programme based on the levels published in Annex D of the Implementation Plan;	Partially Achieved Again, there is indication that levelling was carried out within the project through some of the feedback given in sections 7 and 10.2 of the report, but the report itself does not provide evidence of the levelling given to the units in the study.
Assign Credit Value, which is derived from the formula published in point 25 of the implementation plan;	Partially achieved As in points 4 and 5 above there are indications within the report that credit values were assigned to units however there is no evidence within the report of the approach taken or the values assigned.
Work with awarding bodies' certification of the unit credit;	Not Evidenced There is no evidence of working with awarding bodies

Build a database of accredited bespoke training programmes; and	Not Evidenced There is no evidence of a database being developed through this work
Brief the SSC network in Wales on the progress of this project at their regular network meetings.	Not Evidenced
Summary and Conclusions	
<p>It has been hard to effectively evaluate the SEMTA work as neither the report nor the contracted objectives provided a clear indication of what the project expected to achieve. The evaluators are not clear as to whether SEMTA were to level and assign credit to existing company learning programmes, or develop a system or process to support companies to do this work themselves.</p> <p>The report from SEMTA does not provide a clear description of what they achieved through the project, there is no indication of whether all units were levelled and credited; whether they were accredited; the extent of their work with other awarding bodies; or whether a database was developed.</p> <p>The report is in presentation format – with little contextual narrative which makes formal evaluation difficult.</p>	

Federation of Awarding Bodies

The overarching purpose of the Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) project was to analyse the lessons learned across the awarding bodies and share and spread those lessons more widely across awarding bodies in FAB membership. In evaluating achievements reference has been made to the FAB report 'A comparative analysis of awarding body credit practice within the CQFW' (November 2005).

Contracted Specification	Achievement
Support the work of up to 4 other awarding bodies to be able to assign credit to qualifications offered by them in Wales.	Not Evidenced
Provide updating and training to the awarding bodies in FAB membership on the assigning	Fully Achieved FAB hosted a number of events

and awarding of credit in Wales. This to take the form of five workshops and a series of individual meetings during the life of the Project.	and activities and support capacity building. Some of these events were held with FAB members not participating in the project, and others were open to all members.
Undertake a comparative analysis of awarding body experience of assigning and awarding credit within the project in Wales; as a result of this analysis to produce update reports in Q4 of 2004, Q1 and 2 of 2005 and a final report in Q4 2005.	Fully Achieved A comprehensive report produced in conjunction with Credit Works sets out the experiences of the five Awarding Bodies in assigning and awarding credit within Wales - Lillis, F and Stott, C (November 2005) <i>A Comparative Analysis of Awarding Body Credit Practice within the CQFW</i>
Produce a guidance document, including examples of good practice, for use by awarding bodies offering qualifications within the CQFW.	Fully Achieved <i>"Learning from Experience – Implementing Credit in the CQFW: A Good Practice Guide for Awarding Bodies"</i> has been published and is included in the CQFW handbook as guidance for awarding bodies.
Summary and Conclusions	
<p>FAB achieved all of their contracted objectives. The main part of this study was to produce a comparative analysis of awarding body experience of assigning and awarding credit within the project in Wales. Credit Works and the FAB have produced a comprehensive report which draws together the experience, findings and suggestions of the awarding bodies that participated in the ESF Capacity Building project.</p> <p>The guidance document that was produced by the FAB is now included in the CQFW handbook for awarding bodies.</p>	

Federation of Awarding Bodies – Additional Work

Developing the Principles of Mutual Recognition of Similar Awarding Body Units to Facilitate the Cohesion of the CQFW

In 2006 the Federation of Awarding Bodies were contracted to undertake additional work within the ESF Capacity Building project. This work was to review and revise the mutual recognition principles. FAB were to work with vocational awarding bodies operating in Wales to confirm the principles and test them on a number of units / qualifications which the awarding bodies would have agreed to be part of the project. In evaluating the achievement of the contracted objectives the FAB final report 'Project to develop the principles of mutual recognition of similar awarding body units to facilitate the cohesion of the CQFW' (September 2007) has been used.

Contracted Specification	Achievement
Confirmation of the principles and guidance for mutual recognition that awarding bodies can use for CQFW Units;	Fully Achieved FAB produced draft principles for mutual recognition which appear as appendix B in their final report.
Draft guidance on mutual recognition and deliver this through the form of workshops and meetings during the life of the project;	Partially Achieved FAB were not able to draft definitive guidance as the project highlighted a number of issues that required further discussion. However, an approach was put forward for mutual recognition, which is included in their report and was used in meetings with awarding bodies to test mutual recognition.
undertake a comparative analysis of awarding body experience of mutual recognition and as a result of this analysis to produce a final report in March 2007; and	Fully Achieved FAB held two meetings with awarding bodies whereby awarding bodies looked to mutually recognise each other's units in similar subject areas. The report clearly states the awarding bodies' experiences of mutual recognition and their recommendations for how to develop the principles further.
dissemination and valorisation among the Awarding Body	Fully Achieved A final report was produced by

sector	FAB with the key findings of the study presented at the CCAF meeting in December 2007. The report is clear and the main issues/recommendations are well documented.
Summary and Conclusions	
FAB has met nearly all of the objectives for the work. They were not able to develop definitive guidance on mutual recognition due to the complex nature of the concept, however they clearly state this is the case and put forward draft guidance along with highlighting the areas that need clarifying and further work.	

Developing Awarding Body Credit Awareness and Skills to Assign Credit

A further project that CQFW contracted the FAB to undertake was to introduce more vocational awarding bodies to the CQFW and credit principles and provide staff development on the approaches to assigning level and value to units within qualifications.

FAB were to work with 10 awarding bodies to train and support them in assigning credit to qualifications.

Their report 'Developing awarding body credit awareness and skills to assign credit' (October 2007) has been used to evaluate FAB activity.

Contracted Specification	Achievement
Support the work of 10 other awarding bodies to be able to assign credit to qualifications offered by them in Wales;	<p>Partially Achieved</p> <p>FAB worked with six awarding bodies (Awarding Body Consortium, Central YMCA Qualifications, Glass Qualifications Authority, Institute of Sales and Marketing Management, NPTC, and the Royal Academy of Dance). Awarding Bodies were expected to have assigned level and value to the units in at least one of their qualifications.</p> <p>It is unclear within the report how many qualifications/units were eventually levelled and</p>

	assigned credit.
Provide updating and training to the awarding bodies on the assigning and awarding of credit in Wales. This is to take the form of workshops and meetings during the life of the project;	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>FAB developed training guidance to support the project. The guidance was designed so that it could be used on its own without the awarding body having attended the first meeting.</p> <p>FAB held two workshops with the awarding bodies. The first meeting aimed to develop knowledge and skills to assign level and value to units. The second meeting was to check that everyone had achieved the expected outcomes and to provide an opportunity for the awarding bodies to share their experience of assigning credit and the lessons learnt.</p>
Undertake a comparative analysis of awarding body experience of assigning and awarding credit within the project in Wales; as a result of this analysis to produce a final report in March 2007	<p>Fully Achieved</p> <p>FAB produced a final report which documented the comments, findings and lessons learnt of the awarding bodies involved in the project.</p>
Dissemination and valorisation among the Awarding Body sector	
Summary and Conclusions	
<p>As with the other FAB projects, nearly all of the objectives have been met in this project. The only area where FAB did not quite succeed was in working with 10 new awarding bodies. The study only recruited 6 awarding bodies, but the report clearly states why this was so, along with recommendations on how to engage with more organisations and how to run a project of this type in the future.</p>	

Second Wave Studies Undertaken within the ESF Capacity Building Project

Four awarding bodies were included in the 'Second Wave' studies of the ESF Capacity Building project:

- AMSPAR¹⁶
- ASET
- CACHE
- NCFE

Second Wave bodies were supported by FAB and Credit Works during the process of assigning but were not given funding to support development¹⁷.

Three other awarding bodies 'shadowed' the second wave group:

- AAT
- IIB
- SAS

The evaluators have not had sight of the original objectives for the second wave awarding bodies or any final documentation; therefore we are unable to evaluate this part of the ESF project.

The Credit Works report – *A comparative analysis of Awarding Body Credit Practice within the CQFW* documents the qualifications/units included in the project, as presented in the table below.

Awarding Body	Qualification
AMSPAR	Certificate in Medical Terminology for Non-Clinical Professionals Level 3
ASET	ASET Level 2 Certificate in Emergency First Aid in the Workplace ASET Level 2 Certificate in Moving and Handling (Individuals) (Objects)
CACHE	CACHE Level 3 Diploma in Home-Based Childcare
NCFE	NCFE Level 1 Certificate in Employment Skills

¹⁶ The Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers, Administrators and Receptionists.

¹⁷ First Wave bodies (City and Guilds, Edexcel, OCR, WAMITAB and WJEC) received ESF match funding to support credit development.

Outputs from the Capacity Building Project

The main outputs expected from the ESF Capacity Building are listed on page 16. The extent to which these outputs have been achieved is evaluated below.

Establish a process of agreement on credit values (units/modules and whole qualifications) for their own vocational and academic qualifications offered in and outside of the National Qualifications Framework

Fully Achieved

Each awarding body involved in the ESF Capacity Building project successfully developed a process that incorporated the guidance within the CQFW Handbook so that they could level and assign credit to their own qualifications/units.

Our consultations with the awarding bodies that took part in the ESF Project revealed that they found the project very interesting and informative in building up the 'credit knowledge' within their organisation. However, we cannot verify that the awarding bodies have continued to credit rate any more qualifications/units for the CQFW since their involvement in the project. Some report that they have assigned credit to qualifications since the ESF project, but this has been for the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) system. The impact of the QCF on the CQFW has been discussed in more detail in the accompanying report – Evaluation of the Impact of the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales.

The ESF project was carried out in 2005/06 with some further work being carried over into 2006/07, however, if awarding bodies are not building CQFW requirements into their processes then the knowledge and experience gained through the ESF project could be lost as staff leave the company or change roles.

It is also interesting to note that that only WAMITAB and WJEC are the only awarding bodies to be awarding credits to learners. Indeed the Credit Common Accord states that *“Recognised Bodies that choose to assign credit to units are not required to award that credit.”*

Establish a process for agreement on a common value of credit for generic qualifications offered by different awarding bodies i.e. GCSE, A levels, AS levels, Key Skills, AVCE (Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education) and GNVQ

Partially Achieved

Work has been carried out by WJEC and Edexcel to establish common credit values for GCSEs, and GCEs and work has been carried out on Key Skills by WJEC and Adrian Sheehan. We have not seen any evidence of this type of work being carried out for AVCE.

As GNVQ's are to be withdrawn, Edexcel have assigned credit to BTEC's and have also piloted a new flexible vocational qualification through the work with St Julian's School in Newport.

Undertake development with Careers Wales Online regarding credit transcript for all post-16 learning

Not Evidenced

We have not seen any evidence that work has been undertaken with Careers Wales on the CQFW capacity building project.

In conjunction with ACCAC (the Quality and Curriculum Authority for Wales) specify and undertake development of a single credit unit database

Not Evidenced

We have not seen any evidence that the CQFW team has worked with ACCAC to develop a single credit unit database.

However, WJEC report that they hold the Welsh Examinations Database (WED) which holds data from Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) awarding bodies and some vocational boards. They report that as and when credits are allocated through the CQFW for these qualifications the database will be updated to hold the relevant credit information. This can then be attached to the various files and prints that are distributed.

It is not clear whether the CQFW team is looking to use the WED system for its credit unit database or whether it wishes to develop a bespoke system.

Establish process for agreement on quality assurance arrangements for the ascribing and awarding of credit

Partially Achieved

The review process for this evaluation has identified that each awarding body used slightly different quality assurance arrangements to ascribe and award credit. Each awarding body maintained their existing quality assurance systems and processes with some bodies amending them slightly in order to accommodate

the needs of CQFW. This opinion is shared by Credit Works/FAB who report

“There is little or no evidence that awarding body systems in quality assurance were changed as a result of the project.”¹⁸

Currently the CQFW does not prescribe specific processes for assigning credit so that awarding bodies can adjust their existing procedures to incorporate credit requirements. Due to the different approaches there is no one quality assurance arrangement for credit. A recommendation for quality assurance emerged from work undertaken for ACCAC on how effectively awarding bodies were meeting the Credit Common Accord General Criteria in practice. The recommendation stated:

“There is a need for all Awarding Bodies to develop a robust QA system that monitors the development of its credit system. Some interesting models have emerged during the project and Awarding Bodies should share good practice in this area”¹⁹

The ACCAC report was generally positive about the detailed and systematic approach taken by awarding bodies in assigning credit. Where issues arose these were consistent across the project and needed to be addressed for the CQFW overall – these issues are picked up and reported on in the Credit Works (2005) report.

Credit Works (2005) also comment that there has been discussion about the nature of regulation and quality assurance of the CQFW since the establishment of the framework. They report that this issue has been discussed regularly at CCAF meetings and discussions at the FAB Framework and Credit Group. It is understood that further work continues to be done with respect to developing quality assurance systems for the CQFW and whether there is a need for a common approach.

Develop materials to promote use of the framework and raise provider, employer and public awareness of opportunities facilitated through the framework

Partially Achieved

The CQFW and its developments have been promoted through regular conferences and also through the quarterly meetings of the Credit Common Accord Forum. These sessions have been used to update key stakeholders and partners on the development and progress being made on the Framework.

¹⁸ Learning from Experience – A Comparative Analysis of Awarding Body Credit Practice within the CQFW (November 2005) Credit Works.

¹⁹ CQFW Quality Assurance Monitoring Report (September 2005) ACCAC

Through the ESF projects, some providers and employers have developed an awareness of the CQFW and its aims. However, consultees generally felt that there was only limited awareness amongst these groups (i.e. they would only be aware of CQFW if they had had direct involvement with one of the awarding bodies on the Capacity Building project).

It is also interesting to note that amongst those consulted with from the CCAF, many reported that the awareness of credit was low within their organisation – often limited to the individual(s) who attended the CCAF meetings.

Consultees perceive that there is very low awareness of the Framework amongst the general public. Many felt that this is appropriate until the CQFW ‘has more to shout about’ and when the Framework is fully developed.

‘There are still a lot of operational issues to get through before they can start promoting the framework to learners’ (CCAF Member)

CQFW have recently (January 2008) published a booklet which provides a basic introduction to the concept of credit and its uses. This is a useful booklet for anyone who has heard of the CQFW but is not too aware of what it involves and how it will work.

CQFW also have a website, which is in need of a thorough update. The site does not provide up-to-date information on the developments and progress that has been made so far on the framework. Given that the website address is frequently advertised on materials (e.g. pens, conference folders) and also linked to from Scottish and English framework websites we suggest that a thorough overhaul of the website is carried out in order to demonstrate (and celebrate) the progress that Wales has made in the field of credit.

The consultation process also revealed some interesting comments about information sharing amongst key stakeholders

‘Not much sharing goes on outside of events, or is at least visible outside of conferences and CQFW events. There are more cost effective ways of sharing info i.e. the Dysg Bulletin that gets sent out weekly. Something like this could be invested in. No-one is discouraged from sharing, but there is little pro-activity around encouraging sharing.’ (Awarding Body)

This was re-iterated by other stakeholders who felt that whilst they were interested in the development of the framework, they did not always want to commit a day to attending a conference, rather they preferred to be able to read a newsletter or visit a website to see what developments and progress had been made.

Investigate Management Information System requirements for the operation of the framework and design a system specification for ascribing and awarding credit.

Partially Achieved

Each awarding body involved in the ESF project was asked to investigate the Information Systems that would be needed to ascribe and award credit. All of the awarding bodies have investigated the changes that are needed to be able to ascribe and award credit and most are now able to record credit achieved on learner certificates.

Outcomes from the ESF Capacity Building Project

The ESF application stated that the Capacity Building project would look to make “very substantial progress” in the following areas:

- Publishing credit values for Awarding Bodies own qualifications
- Publishing credit values for generic qualifications offered by a number of awarding bodies
- Supporting Careers online learner transcript programme
- Supporting ACCAC single credit unit database
- Signing up to the Credit Common Accord and agree Quality Assurance procedures for credit
- Raising awareness of and flexibility of credit and qualifications systems with providers, learners and companies.

From our desk review of the final reports and consultations with stakeholders and awarding bodies we have attempted to evaluate the progress towards these outcomes.

Publishing credit values for Awarding Bodies own qualifications

Good Progress

Through the Capacity Building project the awarding bodies involved in the project have assigned credit to some of their own qualifications. These values are stored on an internal database held by CQFW. Although most of the awarding bodies recorded the credit values assigned to their qualifications within their final reports there is no publicly available record of these credit values.

Publishing credit values for generic qualifications offered by a number of awarding bodies

Good Progress

A number of studies have been undertaken through the ESF project to assign credit to general qualifications. Good progress has been made towards this outcome, although it is not clear whether final credit values for each of the general qualifications has been reached and whether this information has been published.

Supporting Careers online learner transcript programme

No Evidence

We have not gathered any evidence through desk research or consultations that any progress has been made against this outcome.

Supporting ACCAC single credit unit database

Limited Evidence

We have not gathered any direct evidence through the desk research or consultations of CQFW working with ACCAC to develop a single credit unit database. As reported previously WJEC hold the Welsh Examinations Database (WED) which has the capability to hold the credit values of units and qualifications.

It is not clear whether CQFW are looking to use the WED system for their credit unit database or whether they wish to develop a bespoke database.

Signing up to the Credit Common Accord and agree Quality Assurance procedures for credit

Good Progress

The Credit Common Accord has been produced and has resulted in the development of the Credit Common Accord Forum (CCAF). The majority of awarding bodies operating in Wales and other organisations have signed up to the Credit Common Accord, and are members of the forum.

As discussed previously, Quality Assurance procedures for credit have been subject to much discussion. Within the ESF project, the awarding bodies worked within their own processes of Quality Assurance. Whilst these differ from organisation to organisation the fundamental governing principle of working within regulatory guidelines does not. All institutions follow the same guidelines for awarding credit.

Raising awareness of and flexibility of credit and qualifications systems with providers, learners and companies.

Limited Progress

Through the ESF project there has been some awareness raising work carried out with respect to credit, although this work has tended to remain within awarding bodies, and participating providers. In general, very little work has been carried out with learners or employers to raise awareness of credit. However, as the credit framework still has areas of development it is felt appropriate that promotion of the framework to these groups has not occurred.

Contribution to ESF Objectives

As the concept of a single credit based qualifications framework is specifically mentioned within both the Single Programming document and the Objective Three Operational Programme for East Wales, the work that has been carried out within the Capacity Building project has clearly contributed to achieving the objectives of these measures. Work that has been undertaken has increased the capacity within awarding bodies to assign and award credit that meets the requirements of the CQFW.

As the Framework is still in the development phase it has not contributed directly to a 'lifelong learning for all' culture, however, if the Framework fulfils its objectives it should encourage and facilitate more lifelong learning within Wales.

Key Findings and Recommendations

In this section we set out the key findings from the evaluation research that was carried out along with recommendations that have emerged from the review process.

Availability of Information

It must be noted that our ability to conduct a robust evaluation of the ESF Capacity Building project was hampered to some extent by the lack of information that was available. We have not been able to fully evaluate all of the work that has been carried out using ESF monies as we have not had the original specifications for the work for some projects or complete copies of the documentation submitted by the awarding bodies (e.g. full copies of appendices or earlier milestone reports were sometimes missing).

We understand that the CQFW team has been in a continual state of flux since 2005 with a number of staff changes, departmental reorganisation and of course the merger of ELWa into the Welsh Assembly Government in 2006. It is understood that over the timescale of the ESF Project there were four project managers which resulted in long periods of no direct operational management, although during these transition periods the project was overseen by other members of the CQFW team. This instability has undoubtedly put a strain on the continuity of systems and processes for storing information.

Recommendation 1

Given the volume of research and recommendations that has been funded through the ESF (and other routes) CQFW need to ensure that they put in place appropriate systems to ensure that there is a full record of the work that has been undertaken and where it is stored so that the conclusions and research findings can be drawn on in the future by all members of the CQFW team and other interested parties.

Aims and Objectives

Some quite significant variation in the level of detail has been observed within the contracted aims and objectives with each awarding body. Some of the contracts include quite specific requirements which list actions and outputs (e.g. City and Guilds) whilst others appear rather more 'high level' overall aims with less

prescription about the required activities and outputs from the project (Edexcel).

The lack of clear requirements from CQFW resulted in many of the awarding bodies appearing to:

- add in new objectives;
- remove objectives/actions for work; or
- rewrite objectives.

This has made it somewhat difficult to evaluate many of the Capacity Building projects as it has not always been clear whether the amendments to the objectives have been made with the agreement of the CQFW team and whether the awarding body has achieved what it set out to do. It is understood through our consultations with the CQFW team that any variations to the original specification had to be documented and agreed with WEFO, however, it would be beneficial to have these variations also documented in the final report.

Although the primary objective of the capacity building work was for awarding bodies to gain practical experience in assigning credit, none of the contracts with the awarding bodies included any specific targets for the number of qualifications or units each awarding body should aspire to assign credit to. Whilst we recognise that CQFW (with the approval of WEFO) tried to keep its arrangements with the awarding bodies flexible in order to facilitate the development of the Framework and engage key stakeholders, given the monies involved it would perhaps have been beneficial to have set targets and outputs (either for individual bodies or for the CQFW as a whole) that could have helped to drive the development of the Framework forward. There is a feeling amongst stakeholders that as the Framework is voluntary and contracts were loosely defined the Framework has not moved forward as quickly as it could have.

Recommendation 2

If future projects are to be carried out ideally SMART²⁰ aims and objectives should be set for the project if possible. The objectives should include clear, measurable targets and outputs to ensure contractors are clear about the scale/scope of the work expected of them and ensure that the investment represents value for money. If amendments are made after discussions between the client and the contractor the aims and objectives should be re-written to take account of these changes so that all staff involved, and evaluators, can understand whether the contractor is fulfilling its requirements.

Partnership Working

A key aim of CQFW was to actively engage awarding bodies in the development Framework rather than presenting them with a completed framework that they have to implement. In this respect the Capacity Building project has been a huge success. Many of the awarding bodies and stakeholders that we have consulted with felt that the key strength of the CQFW is the 'buy in' that it has from awarding bodies and that it has been developed in a 'bottom up' manner:

'The pilot projects and the collaborative approach that they have taken has assisted with providing the backing to take CQFW forward' (Sector Skills Council)

'CQFW worked in conjunction with Awarding Bodies (got them on board). They have a good working relationship with the Awarding Bodies; they have been included in the development of the framework and have opportunities to take part.' (SQCF Partner Organisation)

"The engagement of a number of awarding bodies in the development of the CQFW has meant that they have a genuine interest in seeing the CQFW succeed; it belongs as much to them as to the regulator. This is clearly different from how these

²⁰ A simple acronym used to set objectives is called **SMART objectives**. SMART stands for:

1. Specific – Objectives should specify what they want to achieve.
2. Measurable – You should be able to measure whether you are meeting the objectives or not.
3. Achievable – Are the objectives you set, achievable and attainable?
4. Realistic – Can you realistically achieve the objectives with the resources you have?
5. Time – When do you want to achieve the set objectives?

awarding bodies (and FAB) viewed their stakeholder interest in the NQF”²¹

‘The ESF Project was well managed and CQFW took the right approach to build capacity within the larger awarding bodies’ (Awarding Body)

The process of being involved in the ESF project and also in the CCAF has resulted in awarding bodies, regulators and other key stakeholders working together to reach consensus on how to develop and take forward the Framework. This approach has been recognised by many as a key strength of the CQFW in that is ‘bottom up’ and has managed to engage with a range of key players.

Monitoring, Management and Reporting

We understand that during the course of the Capacity Building project monitoring and management activity was carried out. The Credit Works (2005) report comments that ACCAC appointed a team of consultants to examine how effectively awarding bodies in the project were meeting the (working) Credit Common Accord General Criteria in practice. The consultants produced an audit trail and judgement against each of the working general criteria for four of the First Wave bodies.²² The Consultants reported that awarding body quality assurance practice in the project met the working criteria for the CCA satisfactorily.

Within the original ESF application, CQFW state that:

“The report will be subjected to two separate performance monitoring procedures (1) a monthly performance monitoring form will be completed and the project will be reported to the NC-ELWa Performance Board and (2) the project will be reported approximately quarterly to the NC-ELWa Finance and Performance Sub-Committee.”²³

We have had sight of one progress/monitoring report for the period September 05 – December 05 for the Edexcel Capacity Building project. This form asks the awarding body for a progress update against each of the key project outputs along with details of the main processes and findings of the project so far. We have not

²¹ Learning from Experience – A Comparative Analysis of Awarding Body Credit Practice within the CQFW (November 2005) Credit Works.

²² It should be noted that whilst we have seen a summary of these four reports (ACCAC 2005?) and also section 9.7 in the Credit Works (2005) report we have not had sight of the original four reports. This links back to a previous comment that this evaluation has been constrained by some key information not being available.

²³ CQFW European Social Fund Project Application

had sight of similar reports for other awarding bodies which cover the life of the project.

There is some evidence of monitoring processes being carried out through the ESF project (though we would have liked to have sight of all the monitoring forms for all the projects). Discussions with the CQFW team have illustrated that the ESF projects were subject to monthly monitoring reports and an ESF audit which revealed that the projects were being run in accordance with WEFO and EU funding requirements.

However, there remains a perception amongst stakeholders that CQFW is not as open and transparent as it could be, which consequently leads to questions amongst external stakeholders and partners about what has been achieved and what work is in progress.

'There appears to be little internal evaluation happening, and there's an element of question around whether it is going to plan, within a planned strategy if there is clearly laid out one.' (Welsh Assembly Government)

In reviewing the outputs from the ESF capacity building project, there is considerable variation in the depth of the reporting from the awarding bodies. Some reports are incredibly detailed and explain their methodology, findings and issues arising along with recommendations for further development whilst other reports are very thin and contain very little detail.

Given the nature of the work, along with credit assigned to qualifications or units the only other output is the final report. Whilst the primary aim was to build capacity within the contracted awarding body it is also important that other awarding bodies or interested parties can learn from their experiences. Therefore it is important that the final report produced in these studies is comprehensive and clear so that it can be used by other parties.

Some comments were also received with regard to the openness of the team to constructive criticism

'Barriers faced were in the areas of reporting. Much was invested in terms of funding via CQFW and input from individual organisations carrying out the capacity building projects. Awarding Bodies and other groups were not encouraged to be critically evaluative. Any critical analysis was seen as a criticism of the CQFW team.' (Awarding Body)

Recommendation 3

Improvements should be made to ensure that monitoring and management of projects are carried out and that the results of these exercises are readily available for evaluation purposes.

CQFW need to ensure that final outputs are an accurate record of the work undertaken, results, issues arising and any agreed changes to the scope of the work. Reports should be written in a style so that other parties can learn from the experience and demonstrate transparency.

Sustainability and Impact of the ESF Project

Whilst the evaluation has shown that Awarding Bodies found the capacity building project of value and increased their credit knowledge and understanding, there is little evidence that many of the Awarding Bodies have gone on to assign credit to any more qualifications since the ESF funding finished.

It appears that in-depth credit knowledge is generally limited to those who were directly involved in the ESF project rather than across the organisation. As credit requirements do not appear to have been built into awarding body processes there is a possibility that the credit knowledge and experience that has been gained could be lost as individuals change roles or leave the organisations.

The consultation process revealed that some awarding bodies had assigned credit to more qualifications but this has been to meet the requirements of the QCF rather than the CQFW. There is a concern that the CQFW Capacity Building project is more directly supporting the development of the QCF (through introducing the concept of credit and the basic principles of assigning credit) which is now at the detriment of qualifications being assigned credit for the CQFW.

Recommendation 4

To ensure the sustainability of the lessons learnt from the Capacity Building project, the CQFW team should look to encourage awarding bodies and other recognised bodies to embed the requirements of the CQFW within their internal processes so that all relevant members of the organisation can assign credit and levels to units.

Another Recommendation that came forward in response to the 'sustainability' element of the capacity building project was regarding the way in which research is carried out. A stakeholder suggested that CQFW moves away from a 'project' culture and looks to use future resources to work with influential employers to demonstrate how credit and the CQFW will work in practice. Case studies of how a particular organisation/individual benefited from credit can be used to market the framework. Examples of this type of approach can be found on the SCQF website (www.scqf.org.uk)

Recommendation 5

To investigate alternative methods of researching the use of credit, particularly towards using 'demonstration' projects that can illustrate through case-studies how credit works and its benefits with employers and learners.

Sharing of Information

Whilst the Capacity Building projects were in progress, regular meetings were held with the awarding bodies so that they could share information and experience.

"It was clear that in addition to strengthening the experience and confidence of the participants, this sharing of practice also played a key role in building mutual trust and understanding across awarding bodies. The importance of this for the future of CQFW [...] is worth emphasising the value of mutual learning in developing shared understanding of the credit principles and their application, and hence mutual trust in operation of the system" (Credit Works)

It is clear that the CQFW events and meetings have contributed a great deal to the partnership working and 'buy in' amongst the main awarding bodies. Awarding bodies have gained a great deal through working together and it has helped to progress the CQFW in areas such as mutual recognition.

We understand that information about developments and progress on the Framework is circulated through the CCAF and CQFW meetings and events. Those who attend these events feel they are well organised and a useful way of sharing information:

'The CQFW team has been very successful at keeping us informed of the developments and requirements of the Framework' (Sector Skills Council)

However, there does not appear to be much information sharing outside of events and consequently amongst stakeholders that do not attend there is a perception that little progress has been made on the CQFW as there is no alternative source of information on the developments that have been made.

Many of these stakeholders acknowledge that a lot of development work has been going on 'behind the scenes' but feel there is very limited visible evidence of progress. It is only through attending the CQFW conference or CCAF meetings that interested individuals can find out more about the development of the Framework and its implementation.

One consultee commented

'Not much sharing goes on outside of events, or is at least visible outside of conferences and CQFW events. There are more cost effective ways of sharing info i.e. the Dysg Bulletin that gets sent out weekly. Something like this could be invested in. No-one is discouraged from sharing, but there is little pro-activity around encouraging sharing.' (Awarding Body)

Another consultee (CCAF Member) felt that the CQFW has failed somewhat in terms of making sure all stakeholders are aware of what is going on. They perceive that there is a risk that CQFW faces a backlash when it is implemented as there is a perception that it has been developed 'behind closed doors' and people may not fully understand the rationale, objectives and the way the framework has been developed.

Recommendation 6

Amongst those organisations and individuals who are closely involved in the development of the CQFW there is recognition that there is a good level of information sharing and working together. However, there are problems in sharing information with external stakeholders – those who are outside the development of the Framework but have an interest in it. These stakeholders need to be kept informed of progress and developments. Mechanisms such as an e-mail newsletter or an informative website are cost effective ways of informing a wide audience of the developments in a timely manner.

Marketing

Little activity has been carried out to date to actively market the CQFW to learners and beneficiaries. Most consultees feel that this is appropriate until the Framework is more fully developed.

Small steps have recently been taken to raise awareness of the Framework through the publication of a booklet which provides a basic introduction to the concept of credit and its uses. This is a useful booklet for anyone who has heard of the CQFW but has little knowledge of what it involves and how it will work.

The CQFW website (www.cqfw.net) could be a useful marketing tool for the framework but is currently very out of date. Anyone who

visits the site could easily believe that the CQFW is an old project that has been disbanded.

Recommendation 7

CQFW needs to raise its profile and keep those people who are interested in credit informed about the Framework and its development. A thorough overhaul of the CQFW website is suggested to make it a more effective source of information – both on the Framework itself and the development work that is ongoing. Lessons can be learnt from the SQCF website (www.scqf.org.uk) and the information that is available through this resource.

Whilst it is important to ensure that individuals who are interested in credit are informed it should be noted that the time is not right at the moment for CQFW to be launching a full scale publicity and marketing campaign to learners, employers and parents. There are still many areas to be clarified within the Framework and it is important not to raise expectations before the Framework is ready to be used.

Timescales

There is some perception amongst stakeholders that progress on the implementation of the CQFW has been quite slow. The CQFW project in its current form has been running since 2003 but before the development of the Framework other credit projects were being carried out, for example the CREDIS project. The Welsh Credit agenda has been in place for nearly 20 years.

The Capacity Building work with awarding bodies was carried out between 2005 and 2007, there is a feeling that the momentum of the development of the Framework has dipped in this time:

‘... progress dipped a little just after the pilot. The pilot generated a lot of interest amongst employers which did not really get picked up. Nothing was really progressed. We initiated some projects with employers themselves by weaving credit into other projects as part of their SSA.’ (Sector Skills Council)

It is recognised that the key success of CQFW in engaging all the key partners and gaining buy-in at an early stage has consequences for the speed at which the development of the Framework can progress. However, there are some frustrations with the pace of developments within the CQFW.

‘They can justify the length of time it’s been going given the level of buy-in they have achieved. However, the area they have been least successful in is in the amount of credit-rated stuff that there is given the time they have been doing this. At the last meeting they were talking about credit values for A levels and

Key skills – quite basic stuff – I would have expected this to be done much earlier.’ (CCAF Member)

It is interesting to note that concerns over the speed of progress were highlighted in the CQFW Stocktake report which was written in 2005. The report commented

“Conversely, the main weakness, which was identified by a sizeable number of stakeholders, lay in its perceived speed of progress. Whilst progress was felt by some to be slow and steady, more stakeholders voiced impatience at the slowness of the process and felt that it had become ‘becalmed’ over the past few years. The latter stressed the urgent need to put another surge of development together and called for tangible activity within the next 6 months if CQFW’s credibility with stakeholders were to be maintained.”²⁴

Whilst activity did rise after this report as many of the ESF pilot projects began, it is important that momentum is now maintained in order to raise the profile of CQFW particularly in the light of the developments within credit within the English market.

Many of the consultees felt that CQFW had not progressed as quickly as it could do due to a lack of strategic and top level support behind CQFW, comments included

‘CQFW lacks strategic direction’ (CCAF Member)

‘... importantly the team needs more senior support – either from a minister or from senior management within WAG, There is no clear direction from the top [of WAG] that is driving CQFW forward. Think that CQFW must have faced difficulties engaging with other teams within DELLS because there is no senior figure telling the other teams that they must work with CQFW... I see the CQFW as being slightly marginalised and almost left to its own devices. Credit is not a mainstream concept that is running through all of DELLS activities’ (CCAF Member).

‘There is no strategic lead at the moment. No one in CQFW is in a senior position, or senior enough position to push it forward. It needs a junior minister with full support from the HoD (ACCAC) to really push for it and campaign hard for it’ (Welsh Assembly Government)

There needs to be a clear view that the CQFW is supported politically and operationally within the Welsh Assembly Government. Currently there is a perception that the team and the development of the Framework is marginalised and does not have the support that it needs within DCELLS.

²⁴ CQFW Stocktake Report December 2004 – January 2005 (May 2005) Beaufort Research and Golley Slater

Recommendation 8

It is recommended that the Welsh Assembly Government in conjunction with HEFCW undertake a strategic review of CQFW to determine whether to continue supporting the framework. In order to have an impact the Framework needs to be fully and publicly supported by the Assembly Government. The credit principles need to be seen to be running through all Welsh Assembly activities. If this review concludes that the Framework should continue the Minister for Education should raise the profile of the CQFW amongst senior civil servants to ensure it is on their agenda and a senior level DCELLS member of staff should be given the role of ensuring all departments know about the Framework, support it and use it where appropriate.

Conclusions

The key success of the ESF project has been getting the buy-in of awarding bodies in the development of the Framework; whilst this has consequences for the speed of progress there was general consensus that the partnership working with awarding bodies and other organisations has been a success.

All awarding bodies consulted enjoyed their experience in working on the ESF project, although there are some concerns that the experience and knowledge gained from participation in the project has not been embedded into the day-to-day operations of awarding bodies.

There has been mixed progress against objectives within the ESF Capacity Building Project. CQFW has made good progress towards producing most of the outputs stated in the application form, although it must be noted that only one objective was scored as 'fully achieved'. Evidence has not been seen to be able to confirm progress made with respect to credit transcripts for post-16 learning or the development of a single credit-unit database.

Appendix 1 – NICATS Level Descriptors

The level descriptors should be seen as a developmental continuum in which preceding levels are necessarily subsumed within those, which follow. Learning accredited at this level will reflect the ability to:

Entry level - employ recall and demonstrate elementary comprehension in a narrow range of areas, exercise basic skills within highly structured contexts, and carry out directed activity under close supervision.

Level 1 - employ a narrow range of applied knowledge, skills and basic comprehension within a limited range of predictable and structured contexts, including working with others under direct supervision, but with a very limited degree of discretion and judgement about possible action.

Level 2 - apply knowledge with underpinning comprehension in a number of areas and employ a range of skills within a number of contexts, some of which may be non-routine; and undertake directed activities, with a degree of autonomy, within time constraints.

Level 3 - apply knowledge and skills in a range of complex activities demonstrating comprehension of relevant theories; access and analyse information independently and make reasoned judgements, selecting from a considerable choice of procedures, in familiar and unfamiliar contexts; and direct own activities, with some responsibility for the output of others.

Level 4 - Develop a rigorous approach to the acquisition of a broad knowledge base; employ a range of specialised skills; evaluate information using it to plan and develop investigative strategies and to determine solutions to a variety of unpredictable problems; and operate in a range of varied and specific contexts, taking responsibility for the nature and quality of outputs.

Level 5 - generate ideas through the analysis of concepts at an abstract level, with a command of specialised skills and the formulation of responses to well defined and abstract problems; analyse and evaluate information; exercise significant judgement

across a broad range of functions; and accept responsibility for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.

Level 6 - critically review, consolidate and extend a systematic and coherent body of knowledge, utilizing specialised skills across an area of study; critically evaluate new concepts and evidence from a range of sources; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills and exercise significant judgement in a range of situations; and accept accountability for determining and achieving personal and/or group outcomes.

Level 7 - display mastery of a complex and specialised area of knowledge and skills, employing advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity, accepting accountability for related decision making including use of supervision.

Level 8 - Make a significant and original contribution to a specialised field of inquiry demonstrating a command of methodological issues and engaging in critical dialogue with peers; accepting full accountability for outcomes.

Appendix 2 – Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

ACL	Adult and Community Learning
APEL	Accreditation of Previous Experiential Learning
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CQFW	The Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales
Credit	An award made to a learner in recognition of the achievement of learning outcomes at a specified credit level. Credit is only awarded following quality assured assessment of achievement.
CREDIS Project	The All Wales Modularisation and Credit-based Development Project (later known as CREDIS) was a Welsh Office funded project to investigate the potential for a modular and credit based learning system in Wales with the aim of increasing participation. The project ran from 1993 – 1997.
DCELLS	The Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ELWa	The Assembly Sponsored Public Body responsible for planning and funding post-16 education and training from 2001 to 2005.
FEI	Further Education Institution (in some instances, for clarity, the word college is used to refer to an FEI)
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
HEFCW	Higher Education Funding Council for Wales
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HND	Higher National Diploma
ICT	Information and communications technology
Learning Outcomes	Statements of what a learner can be expected to know, understand and/or do as a result of a learning experience.
Level	An indicator of the relative demand, complexity, depth of learning and of learner autonomy derived from agreed generic level descriptors
NPFS	The National Planning and Funding System
NOS	National Occupational Standards

NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
QCF	Qualifications and Credit Framework
SEMTA	The Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering, Manufacturing Technologies
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SCQF	Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework
SSC	Sector Skills Council
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
WBL	Work Based Learning

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