



# Estyn

*Rhagoriaeth i bawb - Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

## An evaluation of the delivery of key skills qualifications at key stage 4 in schools that are not piloting the Welsh Baccalaureate



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



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## Introduction

### Purpose

- 1 This report evaluates the arrangements for the delivery of the main key skills qualifications of communication, application of number and information and communication technology at key stage 4 in schools in Wales. The report focuses on schools that are not participating in the pilot of the Welsh Bacallaureate at key stage 4.
- 2 In May 2008, Estyn published a survey report on the Welsh Bacallaureate Qualification at key stage 4<sup>1</sup>. We reported that schools delivering the Welsh Bacallaureate at key stage 4 view its introduction to be less complicated than at post-16. Schools that teach the Welsh Bacallaureate to whole cohorts rather than to selected groups generally have more success in planning and organising its delivery.
- 3 The survey found that the planning, co-ordination and assessment of the key skills component are crucial to the successful delivery of the Welsh Bacallaureate at key stage 4. Many of the Welsh Bacallaureate pilot schools deliver most of the key skills of communication and application of number through English or Welsh and mathematics subject work, supplemented by work in other subjects across the curriculum. They deliver the key skill of information and communication technology (ICT) through ICT as a subject and take advantage of the exemption that allows attainment of the GCSE or equivalent in ICT to be a proxy for the key skills qualification.
- 4 This report is based on a sample of 28 secondary schools that inspectors contacted during summer 2008. Inspectors visited 15 schools, eight schools were involved in a telephone survey and five schools completed a questionnaire. Three of the schools are piloting new GCSE courses in Welsh, English, mathematics and ICT, but do not currently enter pupils for key skills qualifications. Inspectors visited one school involved in the Welsh Bacallaureate pilot at key stage 4. Inspectors discussed the arrangements for delivering the main key skills qualifications at key stage 4 with senior staff, key skills co-ordinators, subject leaders and pupils and discussed the development of key skills throughout the school. Inspectors also analysed the results of key skills qualifications over recent years and all secondary school reports for the current cycle of inspections.

### Background

#### The policy context

- 5 Wales faces the challenge of equipping its young people with the transferable skills needed to fulfil their role as a citizen in a rapidly changing global economy. Transferable skills also are important for personal success in education and

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<sup>1</sup> The Welsh Bacallaureate in key stage 4: 2008  
[http://www.estyn.gov.uk/publications/cy\\_the\\_welsh\\_bacallaureate\\_in\\_key\\_stage\\_4.pdf](http://www.estyn.gov.uk/publications/cy_the_welsh_bacallaureate_in_key_stage_4.pdf);  
[http://www.estyn.gov.uk/publications/the\\_welsh\\_bacallaureate\\_in\\_key\\_stage\\_4.pdf](http://www.estyn.gov.uk/publications/the_welsh_bacallaureate_in_key_stage_4.pdf)

employment. Even so, employers in Wales have often expressed concerns regarding skill deficiencies in employees' basic literacy and numeracy. Also, the recently published Future Skills Wales 2003 Generic Skills Survey Summary<sup>2</sup> reported that employers identified lack of IT skills as their most common problem.

- 6 The Welsh Assembly Government has set out its commitment to developing the skills of young people in Wales in a series of policy documents, most recently in One Wales<sup>3</sup> and The Learning Country: Vision into Action<sup>4</sup>.
- 7 As part of this drive to improve skills, a revised curriculum for 3 to 19 year olds in Wales was implemented from September 2008. The new curriculum<sup>5</sup> aims to ensure that skills are developed through all subject areas. Subject content has been reduced so as to increase the focus on skills. A skills framework has been introduced to provide guidance on developing continuity and progression in thinking, communication, ICT and number skills across the curriculum and between key stages.
- 8 New GCSE specifications in English, Welsh, mathematics and ICT are also being piloted that have a strengthened skills element. Course work from these GCSEs could contribute part of the evidence for key skill qualifications.
- 9 Key skills are firmly embedded within the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. At all levels of the qualification, the core requires learners to show progress in all six key skills and learners must achieve at least four key skills qualifications in order to gain the diploma (see appendix 1 for details).
- 10 Key skills are a requirement of the learning core of the 14-19 Learning Pathways. The learning core defines the wider learning intended for all young people in Wales from the age of 14 to 19. There is a minimum requirement that all 14-16 year olds should develop all six key skills at the appropriate level or follow relevant entry/pre-entry level programmes (see appendix 2 for details).
- 11 A further recent development is the convergence of key skills and adult literacy and numeracy standards into one suite from entry level to level 4<sup>6</sup> with the aim of providing clarity and continuity to skills development for all learners.

### **Key skills qualifications**

- 12 Key skills qualifications require learners to provide evidence of being able to apply skills across a range of contexts. Learners are required to prepare a portfolio of

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<sup>2</sup> Future skills Wales 2003 Summary Report

<http://www.arsyllfadysgu.com/uploads/publications/281.pdf>

<http://www.learningobservatory.com/uploads/publications/280.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> One Wales: A progressive agenda for the government of Wales: 2007

<sup>4</sup> The Learning Country; Vision into Action: 2006

<sup>5</sup> For information regarding the revised curriculum see

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/curriculumassessment/arevisedcurriculumforwales/?lang=cy>

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/curriculumassessment/arevisedcurriculumforwales/?lang=en>

<sup>6</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/curriculumassessment/?lang=cy>

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/curriculumassessment/?lang=en>

evidence to demonstrate competence against the key skills standards<sup>7</sup> performance criteria. Schools must follow awarding body guidelines. All evidence is internally assessed by the school and is quality assured by an awarding body.

- 13 Key skills qualifications are available in six areas at level 1 to level 4:

communication	The main key skills
application of number	
information and communication technology	
improving own learning and performance	The wider key skills
problem solving	
working with others	

- 14 The main key skills qualifications were introduced in Wales in 2000 and the wider key skills qualifications followed in 2004. Qualifications in key skills were available as unit certificates before 2000 and as core skills before 1995.
- 15 There has been a significant increase year-on-year in the total number of key skills qualifications awarded in Wales since their introduction. By 2005-2006, over 124,000 qualifications were awarded, compared with just over 19,000 in 2001-2002. Overall, only 3% of all key skills qualifications are awarded to learners at key stage 4 and about 2% are awarded at key stage 3.
- 16 In 2005-2006, about half the total key skills qualifications awarded nationally were at level 1, with most of the remainder at level 2, and only about 10% at levels 3 and 4 together. Overall, the main key skills represent two-thirds of qualifications awarded, with the wider key skills representing the remaining third. Communication has the highest number of qualifications awarded annually.

### Inspection findings

- 17 Estyn inspects standards in key skills across the curriculum as part of its cycle of school inspections. Unless an inspection report refers specifically to key skills qualifications, inspection reports reflect general progress in key skills rather than success in attaining qualifications. This is because the use of key skills qualifications is relatively new to schools.
- 18 Overall, standards in pupils' key skills have improved steadily in secondary schools over the last two inspection cycles. By 2007-2008, standards in key skills were judged to be good or better in 70% of secondary schools inspected. The number of schools where standards in key skills are very good has also increased. There is little variation in standards in key skills between key stages 3 and 4. There are still some shortcomings in about 30% of schools. The main weaknesses are in numeracy and in the writing of less able pupils, particularly boys.

<sup>7</sup> Key skills: Standards and Guidance 2004  
[http://www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_6455.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_6455.aspx)

- 19 In 2007-2008, standards in speaking, listening and reading are good or better in almost 90% of secondary schools. While standards in writing have improved, they are still below that of the other communication skills. Numeracy is the weakest of the main key skills. There are shortcomings in numeracy in 20% of secondary schools. The greatest improvement in standards over recent years has been in ICT. In 2007-2008, standards in ICT were good or better in almost 90% of secondary schools.
- 20 Standards in the wider key skills have also improved. In 2007-2008, over 90% of secondary schools achieve good or better standards in working with others with just under 90% having good or better standards in problem solving. Improving own learning and performance remains the weakest of the key skills. About two-thirds of schools achieve good or better standards in this key skill.
- 21 Most secondary schools are making good progress in teaching literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum. Most schools now have useful procedures for developing these key skills, although good practice is not usually consistently applied across all departments. Schools that enter pupils for qualifications in communication, application of number and ICT usually teach literacy, numeracy and ICT well. The specifications for the key skills qualifications provide a useful structure for teaching key skills.
- 22 In the majority of schools, the leadership and management of developing pupils' key skills across the curriculum are improving. Most schools have a senior member of staff with overall responsibility for the development and implementation of a key skills strategy. In the schools making most progress, the key skills co-ordination role is clearly identified within the school's teaching and learning responsibilities structure. Key skills development is most successful in schools where all departments are fully engaged. Clear direction from senior managers secures high status for key skills within the school and ensures that any necessary resources are identified to support the development. Development targets for key skills are increasingly included in school development plans. However, in schools that do not enter pupils for key skills qualifications, the targets often lack measurable success criteria.



## Main findings

- 23 Although standards in pupils' key skills have improved steadily in secondary schools as judged by inspectors over recent years, and are now good or better in 70% of schools, most schools do not enter pupils for key skills qualifications at key stage 4.
- 24 Overall, only 3% of all key skills qualifications are awarded to learners at key stage 4 and about 2% are awarded at key stage 3. Almost a third of key skills qualifications at key stage 4 are awarded to pupils in Welsh Baccalaureate pilot schools. Nearly 50 (22%) secondary schools in Wales enter pupils for one or more key skills at key stage 4, but about half of these enter very few pupils. Only one school enters almost the whole cohort for all the three main key skills qualifications.
- 25 Schools entering small numbers of pupils for key skills qualifications tend to enter less-able pupils. Almost 70% of key skills qualifications awarded at key stage 4 are at level 1. Just over half of key skills qualifications awarded at key stage 4 are in ICT and almost all of these are gained through the use of 'proxy' qualifications. Proxy qualifications allow candidates to claim an ICT key skills qualification if they successfully gain a GCSE or equivalent qualification in ICT.
- 26 Many schools deliver key skills of communication and application of number through English or Welsh and mathematics subject work, supplemented by work in other subjects across the curriculum. Portfolio evidence for key skills qualifications are usually collected from one or two subjects only, because teachers find it difficult to assemble evidence from a wide range of subjects. A major barrier to the more widespread take up of key skills qualifications is the perceived time-consuming nature of the collation and assessment of the portfolio evidence.
- 27 In a minority of schools, staff find it more manageable to generate portfolio evidence at key stage 3, particularly at level 1, and either enter pupils for key skills qualifications at key stage 3 or defer entry until key stage 4. This is because they prioritise GCSE courses more in key stage 4.
- 28 Overall, in the schools surveyed that enter pupils for one or more of the key skills qualifications at key stage 4, there is often:
- a shared vision for developing pupils' key skills across the school, driven by senior management;
  - a whole-school strategy for developing pupils' key skills, including careful mapping of opportunities for teaching and learning key skills across the curriculum;
  - a set of tasks chosen to generate portfolio evidence that is relevant to learners and fits in meaningfully with their other studies;
  - involvement and ownership of the strategy by all subject departments;

Key skills qualifications at key stage 4  
November 2008

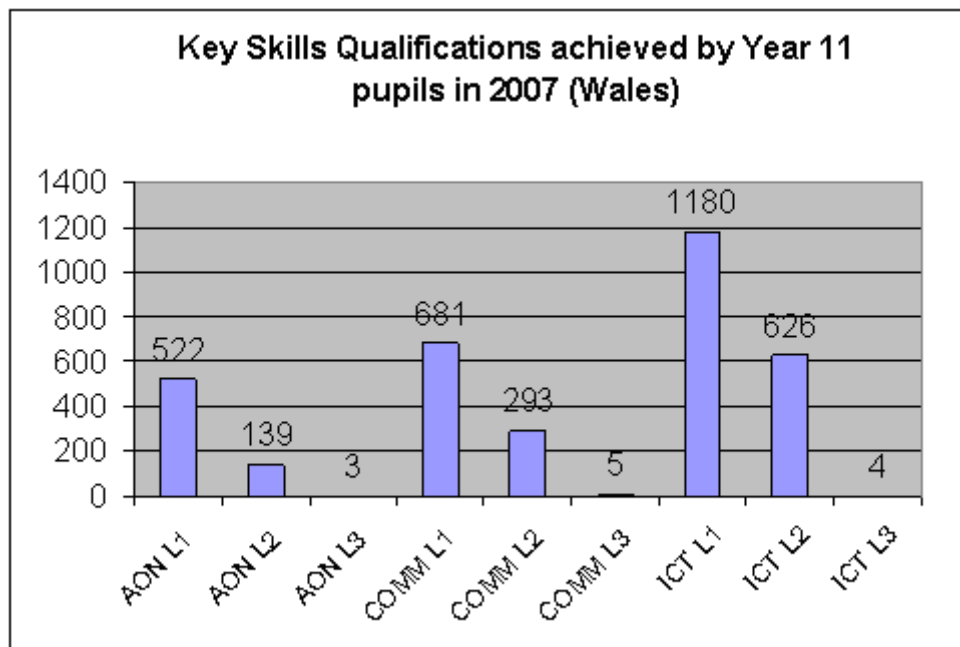
- a programme of training to help staff to understand the assessment criteria of key skills qualifications;
- support for pupils to understand the assessment criteria; and
- effective, formative moderation processes and close liaison with awarding bodies.

## Recommendations

- 29 Currently, only one school in Wales enters almost the whole cohort for all the three main key skills qualifications. It would not be reasonable to make entering all pupils for key skills qualifications at key stage 4 an expectation of all secondary schools, until the practice is more widespread.
- 30 To encourage the greater take-up of key skills qualifications at key stage 4, schools should:
- R1 develop a whole-school strategy and a clear sense of direction for developing pupils' key skills;
  - R2 involve all subject departments more actively in key skills developments;
  - R3 give teachers adequate administrative support to help manage portfolios; and
  - R4 promote the benefits of key skills development to pupils and design relevant key skills work that fits with their other studies.
- 31 Awarding bodies should:
- R5 continue to streamline the work involved in compiling, assessing and moderating key skill portfolios, while maintaining reliability.
- 32 The Welsh Assembly Government should:
- R6 provide guidance on how pupils' work across the curriculum could be used more effectively to generate evidence for key skills portfolios; and
  - R7 publish data at national and school level on the proportion of pupils gaining key skills qualifications at each level.

## How many key skills qualifications are gained at key stage 4?

- 33 Although teachers in the majority of secondary schools in Wales actively plan for and teach key skills across the curriculum, most do not enter pupils for key skills qualifications at key stage 4.
- 34 Despite significant overall increases in the number of key skills qualifications awarded over recent years, most are awarded to learners over 16 years old. Key skills qualifications at key stage 4 represent only 3% of the total awarded. However, there has been an increase in the number of key skills qualifications awarded to pupils at key stage 4. In 2000-2001, only 69 key skills qualifications were awarded at key stage 4, but this had increased to 4,180 by 2005-2006.
- 35 In 2007, nearly 50 (22%) secondary schools in Wales enter pupils for one or more of the three main key skills at key stage 4. Eleven of these are piloting the Welsh Baccalaureate at key stage 4. Of the remaining schools, nine enter more than 30% of its cohort for one or more key skills qualifications. In half of these schools, pupils are only entered for the ICT key skills qualification. One school in Wales enters almost the whole cohort for all the three main key skills qualifications.
- 36 The table below shows the number of key skills qualifications gained by Year 11 pupils in Wales in 2006-2007 (the most recent year for which we have figures). The relative proportions are broadly representative of recent years.



Note that some pupils achieve key skills at more than one level. Figures for the number of pupils who achieve key skills qualifications are not available.

- 37 Teachers often perceive key skills qualifications as qualifications for less able pupils who are unlikely to attain GCSE passes at any grade. In 2006-2007, almost 70% of key skills qualifications awarded by Year 11 are at level 1. Schools entering small numbers of pupils tend to enter less able pupils who are in danger of failing to

achieve a GCSE in Welsh, English or mathematics. In one school, key skills feature in the key stage 4 options choices for pupils involved in 'alternative' pathways and therefore only benefit a small group of pupils. The greatest increases since 2005-2006 have been in the proportions of level 2 qualifications awarded. This may be an early indication of changes in teachers' perceptions of key skills qualifications as being useful only for the less able pupils.

- 38 Just over a half of key skills qualifications awarded at key stage 4 are in ICT. About 28% of qualifications are in communication and 22% in application of number. Almost all the ICT qualifications are gained through the use of proxy qualifications. The main proxies used for ICT are GCSE ICT, the Award in Digital Applications (AiDA) and the Diploma in Digital Applications (DiDA).
- 39 Almost a third of key skills qualifications at key stage 4 are awarded to pupils in Welsh Baccalaureate pilot schools. Several schools are now planning to introduce key skills qualifications as part of their involvement in the Welsh Baccalaureate roll-out at key stage 4 and as a result an increase in qualifications awarded is expected in future years.

## How are schools delivering key skills qualifications?

- 40 Inspectors visited four of the nine schools that entered a significant proportion of pupils for key skills qualifications at key stage 4 in 2007, but are not part of the Welsh Baccalaureate pilot. In these schools, the following subject departments usually take the lead for coordinating the collation of portfolio evidence necessary for gaining the qualifications:

Key skills qualifications	Subject department
Communication	Welsh or English
Application of number	Mathematics
Information and communication technology	ICT

- 41 Nearly all the schools that are piloting the Welsh Baccalaureate at key stage 4 follow this model too.
- 42 These schools use English or Welsh and mathematics lessons to deliver the key skills of communication and application of number respectively. In these subjects, teachers adjust their teaching programmes to accommodate the requirements of the key skills qualifications. In most cases, this results in devising a task or series of tasks that help pupils to generate evidence for their portfolio.

In one school, not currently involved in Welsh Baccalaureate, teachers have successfully included the key skills of communication and application of number in the key stage 4 curriculum. Initially, the school entered pupils for key skills qualifications to increase the number of qualifications that pupils could gain. However subsequently, teachers have realised the contribution that key skills qualifications can make to the wider point score and the level 2 threshold performance measures and this has added to the status and perceived importance of key skills qualifications.

In the school, mathematics coursework is extended to meet the assessment requirements of application of number. In 2007, 90% of Year 11 pupils achieved level 1 application of number and 33% achieved level 2.

Opportunities to gather the evidence required for the communication portfolio are created within the English GCSE course. Staff and pupils are also involved in a day when the usual timetable activities are suspended to free up time needed to assemble the portfolio evidence.

All pupils in Year 9 are entered for key skills qualification in ICT at level 1 and those pupils who study GCSE ICT at key stage 4 are also entered for ICT at level 2.

- 43 In most schools, portfolio evidence for the main key skills qualifications is generated mainly through GCSE courses in English or Welsh, mathematics and ICT. A few schools use evidence produced by other subjects. Teachers generally find it difficult

to assemble evidence from a range of subjects, as this adds to the complexity of collation and moderation, and so the extent of this practice is limited. Some schools plan to use a wider range of evidence once key skills have been successfully integrated across the curriculum.

- 44 In a minority of schools, other departments, such as geography and religious education, make a significant contribution to developing evidence for the communication portfolio. In one school, pupils are encouraged to produce a bilingual portfolio to demonstrate their key skills in English and Welsh.
- 45 Many of the schools that enter pupils for application of number successfully use the GCSE mathematics data-handling coursework to generate portfolio evidence. However, the coursework element in mathematics has been discontinued. Schools will therefore need to explore other ways for pupils to produce the portfolio evidence for application of number.
- 46 Some schools enter most pupils for level 1 qualifications in the first instance and then enter some pupils for level 2. While this approach is successful in terms of increasing attainment, it creates unnecessary examination costs and unnecessary bureaucracy for both pupils and teachers. The key skills standards provide progression from level 1 to level 4, but there is no intention that all pupils should start at level 1 and progress through the levels. They should be entered at the level that is appropriate to the standards they are achieving.
- 47 In two schools surveyed, the timetable is suspended for key skills delivery events. While this strategy generates enthusiasm and provides time for producing and collating evidence, it is only effective as part of a wider strategy to implement and gain qualifications in key skills.
- 48 Two of the schools find it more manageable to generate much of the portfolio evidence in key stage 3, with the intention of entering for the key skills qualifications at key stage 4. Although this is a useful strategy and addresses some of the concerns expressed by the majority of teachers regarding the burden of portfolio-building, it does not replace the need for pupils to develop their key skills further throughout key stage 4.
- 49 Many schools that enter pupils for key skills qualifications pre-16 often do so at key stage 3, particularly for ICT. Nearly as many qualifications are gained in key stage 3 as in key stage 4. Assembling key skills portfolio evidence is more straightforward in key stage 3 where the majority of pupils follow the same curriculum. In key stage 3, key skills work is often the responsibility of specific departments. In other cases, departments are paired to deliver individual key skills. For example, mathematics and geography departments collaborate on application of number and information and communication technology and technology departments collaborate on ICT. In a few of the schools in our sample, the form tutor plays a key role in monitoring the progress pupils make with their portfolios.

One school has its own internal programme for rewarding progress in all six key skills at key stage 3. This involves awarding its own bronze certificates in Year 7, silver certificates in Year 8 and gold certificates in Year 9. This work contributes to pupils gaining key skills qualifications at level 1 and to maintaining a strong focus on key skills throughout key stage 3.



## How effective are the leadership and management of key skills qualifications?

- 50 In a small number of schools in our sample, non-teaching staff members provide administrative support for teachers delivering and assessing the key skills, such as helping to collate evidence, preparing portfolios for moderation and maintaining a database that tracks pupils' progress. The collation, assessment and moderation of key skills portfolios are often managed well when a specifically identified department takes responsibility for a key skill.
- 51 In a minority of the schools surveyed, policies for gaining key skills qualifications form part of a wider, whole-school strategy for developing learning skills.

One school has recently formed a learning skills group with the remit of developing a strategy to embed key, basic, thinking and emotional intelligence skills across all key stages and subject areas. While this strategy has not yet been fully evaluated, early indications suggest that it has led to a greater emphasis on developing pupils' learning skills.

- 52 Overall, in the nine schools surveyed that enter pupils for one or more of the key skills qualifications at key stage 4, there is often:
- a shared vision for developing pupils' key skills across the school, driven by senior managers;
  - a whole-school strategy for developing pupils' key skills, including careful mapping of opportunities for teaching and learning key skills across the curriculum;
  - a set of tasks chosen to generate portfolio evidence that is relevant to learners and fits in with their other studies;
  - involvement in and ownership of the strategy by all subject departments;
  - a programme of training to help staff to understand the detailed assessment criteria for the key skills qualifications;
  - support for pupils to understand the assessment criteria; and
  - effective, formative moderation processes and close liaison with awarding bodies.

## Supporting the delivery of key skills qualifications

- 53 Most schools make sure that teachers who co-ordinate key skills receive appropriate training and support. Awarding bodies provide good training for schools, focusing on the assessment of pupil portfolios. This has been supplemented by whole-school, in-service training and effective one-to-one support for individual co-ordinators.
- 54 A small number of key skills co-ordinators have won GTCW bursaries to support their development in the role. In one school that is making good progress, a number of teachers have gained the key skills professional development qualification (KSPD)<sup>8</sup> which is the only professional qualification in Wales that focuses on key skills teaching, learning and assessment.
- 55 Dysg<sup>9</sup> provides good support for schools in developing and implementing a key skills strategy. Regular network meetings showcase good practice in schools, often involving presentations from pupils. The majority of schools sampled had attended training events or received direct support from Dysg.
- 56 The Welsh Assembly Government website has a section dedicated to key skills support. Schools find this a very useful resource. It ensures that good practice is shared and schools are kept up-to-date with key skills development, and also provides guidance on assessment and moderation.
- 57 A small number of local authorities provide support for teachers on moderating pupil portfolios. This is particularly useful and ensures that most schools achieve high pass rates for those pupils entered for the qualifications.
- 58 Whole-staff training in many schools provides opportunities for teachers to develop key skills expertise, audit opportunities to develop key skills across the curriculum, organise portfolio building and standardise assessment arrangements. In a small number of schools, the development programme for newly qualified teachers also includes training on key skills. This ensures that all staff are equipped to contribute to the key skills strategy.
- 59 One school that has successfully implemented a whole-school key skills strategy has formed a network to support neighbouring schools.
- 60 Learners' views regarding key skills vary across the schools visited. Where schools have carefully presented the value of developing key skills, learners are positive about the benefits and are aware of the views of employers. In other schools, pupils are not fully aware of the possible benefits of developing key skills.

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<sup>8</sup> For information on The Key Skills Professional Development Qualification (KSPD) see [http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/kspd\\_info\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/kspd_info_flyer.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Dysg is now part of the Learning Improvement and Professional Development Division of DCELLS.

## Conclusion

- 61 A major barrier to the more widespread take up of key skills qualifications is the perceived time-consuming nature of the collation and assessment of the portfolio evidence. The majority of teachers interviewed as part of the survey said that they found administering assessment processes burdensome. Welsh Baccalaureate pilot schools receive additional funding that can be used to alleviate these perceived administrative and time burdens. Pupils in these pilot schools are additionally motivated to attain key skills qualifications, because they need to do so to gain the overall Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification.
- 62 National and school level information on key skills qualifications is not always published in a form that helps to promote understanding of these qualifications or of their importance. For example, the current RE2 form reports the overall number of key skills qualifications, but not the levels attained. The recording of levels attained could contribute to the publication of comparative national data. Having these benchmarks would help schools and local authorities to analyse performance in key skills better. All-Wales data for key skills is no longer published separately as a statistical brief. Key skills data for Wales is now included in the Statistical First Release: Awards of key skills qualifications published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families.<sup>10</sup> The data does not show attainment rates against entry.
- 63 School staff accept that young people need transferable skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. However, there is still a debate about the most effective way to measure pupils' competence in key skills. The small-scale but growing use of key skills qualifications in key stage 3 and 4 shows that teachers have found the key skills qualifications useful for certain groups beyond those on the Welsh Baccalaureate course for whom they are compulsory.

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<sup>10</sup> [http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000783/DIUS\\_SFR\\_04\\_2008\\_PDF.pdf](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000783/DIUS_SFR_04_2008_PDF.pdf)

## Appendices

### Key skills requirements within the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

	<b>Minimum key skills requirement (part of the Core Certificate)</b>
<b>Welsh Baccalaureate Foundation Diploma</b> (National Qualifications Framework level 1) Available pre-16 and post-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four key skills at level 1, which must include one from communication, application of number and ICT, and evidence of having pursued all six key skills</li> </ul>
<b>Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate Diploma</b> (National Qualifications Framework level 2) Available pre-16 and post-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four key skills, including communication, application of number and ICT. At least two to be achieved at level 2 and two at level 1. There must be evidence of having pursued all six key skills.</li> </ul>
<b>Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma</b> (National Qualifications Framework level 3) Available post-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three key skills at level 3, one of which must be from communication, application of number and ICT, together with the other key skills at level 2</li> </ul>

### Learning Core of Learning Pathways 14-19 at key stage 4

<b>Skills</b>	<b>Minimum requirement</b>
<b>Key skills</b>	<b>All 14-16 year olds should develop all six key skills</b> (or follow appropriate entry/pre-entry level programmes for learners working below Level 1 in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) at the level appropriate to their programmes).
<b>Welsh language skills</b>	All 14-16 year olds should be taught Welsh/Welsh second language as part of the National Curriculum requirements.
<b>Other work-related skills</b>	All 14-19 learners should develop skills relevant to the workplace. ACCAC's frameworks for careers education and guidance and work-related education set out the minimum, including entrepreneurship, for full-time learners in schools.

## Wider Points Score and Threshold Equivalencies

A points scoring system has been developed by QCA and accommodates all externally approved qualifications (pre-16 and 16-18).

### Wider Points Score

Key Skills Qualifications	
Pass	Point score per key skill
Level 1	18.8
Level 2	34.5
Level 3	63

### Threshold equivalencies

Thresholds represent a volume, or 'size' of qualifications at a specific level on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), three thresholds have been established:

**Level 1** – a volume of qualifications at level 1 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at Grade D-G

**Level 2** – a volume of qualifications at level 2 equivalent to the volume of 5 GCSEs at Grade A\*-C

**Level 3** – a volume of qualifications at level 3 equivalent to the volume of 2 A levels

Key skills qualifications	Contribution to threshold Pass
<b>Key skills level 1</b>	
Level 1	15%
<b>Key skills level 2</b>	
Level 1	15%
Level 2	15%
<b>Key skills level 3</b>	
Level 1	24%
Level 2	24%
Level 3	15%