

'Learning Country: Learning Pathways 14-19'

Action Plan

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Learning Country: Learning Pathways 14-19

Action Plan

Foreword

The Welsh Assembly Government set out its intentions for education in Wales in '*The Learning Country*' in September 2001. The development of the proposals set out in the consultation document '*Learning Country: Learning Pathways 14-19*' in November 2002 took forward these ideas and represented an exercise in real partnership between all those engaged in providing for young people in this age group, together with young people themselves.

This Action Plan draws on that further consultation. It is far-reaching, innovative, and seeks to deliver the best possible provision for learners throughout Wales.

Recognising the needs of learners is key to improving provision and raising standards. Institutions, organisations and individuals will need to look closely at the extent to which their current provision meets those needs. That will demand clear analysis of outcomes and consultation with the learners for whom the provision is intended. Unless we can achieve this we shall not be able to harness the considerable potential of:

- the 25 per cent of 19 year olds and 32 per cent of 25 year olds who do not currently achieve Level 2 qualifications;
- the 10 per cent of 16-18 year olds not currently in education, training or employment; and
- the further 12 per cent who are in employment but who are not taking up any opportunities for further learning.

There is no doubt that implementing this Action Plan will demand substantial change – change which learners, providers and practitioners must have the opportunity to inform. The partnership approach that characterised the development of the consultation proposals will be further developed through a range of task groups to be established to deliver the strategy itself. We shall continue to ensure that the widest possible range of learners, providers and practitioners have the opportunity to inform developments at every stage. We shall continue to draw on the expertise and experience that has proved so valuable so far. 'Made in Wales' solutions will be created to capitalise the potential of Wales as a small, clever country with a commitment to equality of opportunity, social inclusion and sustainability.

We recognise that new learning needs require new approaches to learning management. They will need a wide range of individuals making different contributions to supporting learning. We shall seek to involve the widest possible range of contributors in this process. We shall also acknowledge that any map of learning routes needs to be set in the context of a lifelong continuum of learning.

So the implications of this Action Plan are not just about learners from 14-19. They are about the future prosperity of Wales as a vibrant economy with a highly skilled, flexible, motivated and creative workforce. They are about equality and social inclusion and the sustainable development of our communities, including their multi-cultural aspects. And they are about enriching and enhancing our rich and diverse culture and heritage. Every one of us has a vested interest in their success.

I am genuinely grateful to all those who took the time to provide such thoughtful and valuable responses to the consultation. The quality of the responses and the common views they reveal augers well for the successful implementation of this Action Plan. I look forward to the outcomes, which will truly make a difference for all our young people in Wales and enable them to make a significant contribution to the future of Wales and the wider world.

Jane Davidson AM
Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

Purpose

1.1 The responses to the consultation confirm that we should take a concerted approach to enriching learning between 14-19. Young people need the best possible platform to achieve their potential; to live fulfilling personal lives; and to participate in the future economic, social and cultural prosperity of Wales and the wider world.

1.2 The purpose of this Action Plan is to provide a strategic framework for future developmental partnership work. We want to build on the extensive skills, experience and expertise in education, training and employment in Wales. This Action Plan gives details of specific action that is to be taken by the Welsh Assembly Government with its partners to:

- enhance and extend the learning experiences of all young people to raise expectations; and
- work towards our aspirational target.

“95 per cent of young people to be ready for high skilled employment or higher education by 2015”

1.3 This Action Plan will be taken forward by an Overarching 14-19 Steering Group, building on and formalising the work which the External Reference Group did during the development of the consultation proposals. Much of the detailed work will be undertaken by a range of sub-groups in close collaboration with learners and providers. A Young People’s Advisory Group will ensure that the developments are appropriate to motivate and inspire young people in Wales.

1.4 The focus throughout the development of the proposals and this Action Plan has been on learners, rather than structures. We reflect that by using the terms *learners, learning providers and learning settings*. We believe the highest quality teaching, lecturing, coaching, supporting and training delivered by learner-focused providers in all settings is essential to the achievement of our aspirations.

Summary

1.5 This Action Plan sets out what we need to do to enable all learners from 14-19 to achieve as much as possible in gaining the knowledge, practical experience, understanding and skills essential for success in life and work. It builds on the products of Community Consortia for Education and Training (CCETs) and Young People’s Partnerships (YPPs) as well as on exciting and innovative developments across Wales that are providing strong evidence of what works best for learners.

1.6 It seeks to use the evidence we have about what motivates young people and how they learn best. What is important is that young people's knowledge, together with relevant experience and essential skills, provides them with the materials for success and keeps open a range of options for their future development – providing a **flexible portfolio for life and work in the 21st century**.

1.7 The **main themes** in this strategy include:

- a **Wales-wide strategic approach** informed by the needs of learners, the expertise and experience of learning providers working in partnership and the economic, cultural and social context of Wales itself;
- the adoption of an **overarching target**, underpinned by a new system of indicators to demonstrate improvement which will be developed in collaboration with providers to ensure they reinforce policy outcomes;
- the development of an overarching award recognising young people's wider learning, namely a **Welsh Baccalaureate** at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced levels including work-based programmes - based on the best practice identified through pilots;
- access to a range of **Learning Pathways** each of which has knowledge, practical and wider skill elements, the balance to be appropriate to the learner's needs, aptitudes and interests, moving away from specific vocational and academic descriptors or exclusive routes to learning;
- the specific examination of the requirements of the **statutory National Curriculum at Key Stage 4** to ensure they better reflect the needs and interests of a wider range of pupils and achieve a closer fit with Key Skills;
- wider choice – through an **Options Menu** devised locally, but with guidance from the **Overarching 14-19 Steering Group** designed to share good practice throughout Wales;
- wider experience – through ensuring that all young people have **work focused, community or voluntary opportunities and experiences** to develop wider essential skills;
- impartial high quality **advice, support and information** for learners - developing of the role of **Learning Coach**, and tailored **personal support**; and
- **qualifications and assessment** systems that better support learning and practitioner intervention.

Strategic approach

1.8 Many respondents had already been involved in the development of the consultation proposals through the extended work of the Project Team, the External Reference Group and other contacts. The responses indicate strong support for continuing in consultation mode. A long term **Overarching 14-19 Steering Group**, with broad membership, will be established to begin work in

Summer 2003 and to continue to oversee delivery of this Action Plan for the foreseeable future. The Overarching 14-19 Steering Group will:

- work with the Young People's Advisory group to develop a methodology for the collection, use and dissemination of **young people's views**;
- establish coherent planning frameworks for 14-19 Networks by drawing up **common principles and operating criteria** to enable groups to work together at local level;
- monitor the development of **pilot projects** to ensure effective dissemination of findings to inform future action;
- monitor and review the **impact of the Learning Pathways Group** and its sub groups;
- work with local 14-19 Networks to ensure that action at local level reflects **best practice for learners**, and encourages the sharing of good practice;
- monitor the development of **Option Menus** at local level to ensure sufficient coverage and flexibility;
- monitor progress on the **cross-cutting themes** of equality of opportunity, social inclusion, bilingualism and sustainability;
- develop ways to encourage the **involvement of employers** including awards such as Investors in People, the Basic Skills Agency Employers' Pledge and a Quality Mark for employers offering work experience;
- advise the Department for Training and Education on the **implementation** of all aspects of this Action Plan;
- consider ways to address the **training needs of learning providers** at national level;
- maintain oversight of **quality assurance procedures** for all aspects of 14-19 provision, make an **annual report** on progress and recommendations for future action;
- monitor the **impact of implementation** for learners, learning providers and learning settings;
- lead in the **promotion** of these developments for learners, learning providers, parents, employers, communities and partners at all levels;
- take account of relevant developments in **14-19 learning throughout the world**.

1.9 Young people, as consumers, clearly have a strong vested interest in the development of these proposals. A **Young People's Advisory Group** will be established alongside the Overarching 14-19 Steering Group, with representative young people also being members of the Overarching Group. It is critical that this group reflects the diverse range of 14-19 learners, such as geographical, different forms of learning (work based, school, college), unemployed, and race and gender. The Young People's Advisory Group would:

- comment on the **development of pilot projects** and on their impact on learners;

- work with **Youth Forums** and **Schools Councils** and other groups of young people to ensure developments at local level reflect and share best practice for learners;
- comment on the **implementation** of all aspects of this Action Plan;
- monitor the **impact of implementation** for learners, learning providers and learning settings.

1.10 We recognise that this Action Plan sets out proposals that are challenging in scope. We suggest a timetable, set out at Annex A. This details the evidence collecting, pilot projects and specific actions that will underpin the incremental changes as they take place.

1.11 **Pilot projects** will take place at several levels:

- existing pilots e.g. Intermediate and Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate in 19 schools and colleges;
- specific pilots for aspects of actions set out in this Action Plan, carried out in partnership with learning settings and match-funded;
- activity in line with developments set out in this plan, which will inform developments in the various working groups and the programme as a whole, but which originates at local level and is funded through existing channels;
- activity in line with developments but funded from other sources such as those supporting school teachers' professional development, ELWa's Learning Challenge Fund, New Opportunities Fund, voluntary sector, health programmes and so on, which will also inform the implementation and development of actions in this Action Plan.

1.12 Above all, the successful implementation of this Action Plan is dependent on the quality of **leadership and management** in all learning settings, including the workplace. We rely upon leaders with the vision and enthusiasm to contribute to the development of this Action Plan and to secure the changes necessary to implement it. In schools, our training and support for headteachers, through the National Headship Development Programme, and for school leaders, through the development of the new School Leadership Modules, provide a foundation of strong leadership. The recent agreement between teaching unions, the UK central government and the Welsh Assembly Government will help by providing more time for teachers for their professional functions – including the support they give pupils – as other tasks are delegated to support staff. Besides all that a new Leadership Foundation has been proposed by Universities UK to support the HE sector to improve leadership and management. It will work in partnership with the new Leadership College for the post-16 learning and skills sector.

1.13 But the success of these proposals rests primarily on the **learning providers** in all settings who work directly with young people in developing their potential. Learning takes place as the result of complex and sophisticated

relationships based on mutual respect. Learning providers enable and facilitate this transaction with learners of all abilities, and empower and inspire the learner to achieve. This Action Plan seeks to enhance the ways learners are enabled to learn to take advantage of cutting edge knowledge about how the brain works and develops and how learning occurs. **Continuous professional development** for learning providers in all settings will need to support them in this.

1.14 That leadership in all sectors – will be critical to make the best of growing complexity. The range of opportunities that will be available as this Action Plan is implemented will create learning choices and opportunities much wider than the current choices offered to young people. They will certainly be different from the limited choices available to their parents and will also provide alternative challenges and opportunities to prospective employers. The definition of an appropriate education for the 21st century may well have little resemblance to that understood by many of the key players as being a traditional ‘good education’. We need to mount a **promotional campaign**, led by the Overarching 14-19 Steering Group, but in close partnership with local networks and learning providers, to inform young people, their parents, employers and communities of the exciting and innovative opportunities that will become the norm. The timing of this campaign will depend on the programme of implementation of the proposals.

SECTION 2: LEARNING FOR LIFE AND WORK

Learner-focused planning

2.1 All plans which cover learning for 14-19 year olds should support and enhance the **focus on the learner** or prospective learner. The Welsh Assembly Government has given a commitment to review planning requirements on local authorities in light of authorities' overarching responsibility for community planning. Future requirements for education strategic plans, early years and childcare plans, school organisation plans, behaviour support plans and children and young people's partnership plans are to be looked at in this context. Scope for strengthening the focus on the learner will form part of the review, which is due to start in 2003.

2.2 **Young people should be consulted** on the development, implementation and evaluation of plans and provision locally. Section 176 of the Education Act 2002, likely come into force in 2004, will require local authorities to consult pupils on decisions about school provision which affect pupils. Young people should also to be able to have a say in the quality of provision, through the Young People's Advisory Group, Funky Dragon and schools councils but also as matter of course in every learning setting.

Learning Communities

2.3 The 2002 Act gives governing bodies of schools the power to provide services for the communities they serve. The intention is that the new provision should come into force in September 2003 and consultation is taking place on draft guidance for the development of **community focused schools**; with funding in 2004-05 for some pilot work.

2.4 There is strong recognition that the accepted **pattern of school day and term** is not well adapted to the needs of the future. This challenges current timetabling practice. We can expect elements of learning to be delivered in modules, extended experience, whole days and so on, to meet the needs of learners and to facilitate greater flexibility. At the same time such changes can mean using teachers' time more effectively and reflect the increasing role of support staff in future. LEAs, schools and governing bodies will need to develop new approaches to managing and delivering the extended provision on school sites. The development of Estyn's new thinking on the **organisation and calendar of learning**, set out in '*Excellent Schools: a vision for schools in Wales in the 21st century*', will be covered in the ELL Committee's review of School of the Future, pending the new Committee taking forward the review from June 2003.

2.5 Many colleges work closely with adult and community education locally and already make **flexible provision to meet the needs of learners** at all levels,

including timing, location and delivery methods which encourage community learning. The best practice in such developments will provide good examples for further innovation.

2.6 Developing a **learning culture** in families and communities provides a strong support mechanism for learners. The development of **community learning networks** in addition to community focused schools will extend the opportunities for learning for any 14-19 year olds. The development of a learning ethos within a whole community will be crucial in supporting and motivating learners in their choices and helping them to stick at it. Communities First Partnerships and Rural Community Action Partnerships will have a significant role in further development of these elements within their areas. Similarly, ELWa-National Council's work on promoting innovative approaches to learning communities through community learning champions and its work in funding Family Learning initiatives, will play a significant part in this development. Above all we need to ensure learners have a sufficient basis of learning, and an interest and excitement in learning, to enable them to pick up where they left off, for example in Welsh or a modern foreign language, even after an interval of a few years.

Learning methods and learning skills

2.7 It will be important for interested parties locally and nationally to share good practice in delivering through different **learning methods and styles and needs**, recognising the various ways in which people respond. This is to ensure an emphasis on developing the young person as a whole. We propose to **hold a national event to highlight existing good practice** in Autumn 2003, to include outcomes of the Funky Dragon survey of young people and different sorts of intelligence. The 14-19 Networks may choose to take forward this initiative locally and build on the many exciting initiatives all over Wales. In-service training for all learning providers should include both what is learnt and how it is learnt. This should take account of the findings of the first phase of the '*Narrowing the Gap*' project, which were the subject of a conference in October 2002 and will be the focus for further dissemination sessions in 2003.

Essential Skills

2.8 There is overwhelming support for our emphasis on wider skill development. But this is accompanied by some concern about the references to 'hard' and 'soft' skills, as the description 'soft' implies that they are less important. We agree that the term **essential skills** should be used as the generic term for all skills. **Key Skills** will cover the six specific areas of Application of Number, Communication, ICT, Working with Others, Improving Own Learning and Problem Solving. They should be delivered through practical experience and not just as 'bolt on'. There is a need to raise the essential skill levels of young people, taking account of skills which should be embedded in their chosen

courses of study but which do not necessarily lead to stand alone qualifications. Basic skills would continue to be used to define specific literacy and numeracy skills.

2.9 In order to ensure that they have the chance to develop their wider essential skills as well as supporting their acquisition of Key Skills, the experiences and opportunities in the **whole of a young person's life** need to be taken into account. Young people will need to be encouraged to include in their Progress File details of the skills and experiences they get through part time employment, sports or other leisure activities, youth clubs, volunteering, caring for others and so on.

Indicators of progress and improvement

2.10 There is considerable support for the aspirational overarching target of 95 per cent of young people ready for high skill employment or higher education by 2015, though this is tempered by the acknowledgement of the need for the proposals to be fully adopted by all players in education and training in Wales. As a sub-target for the 19 age group, we expect that by 2015 90 per cent of 19 year olds will achieve Level 2, and 70 per cent of 19 year olds will achieve Level 3. We need to develop the current set of targets into a **system of indicators of progress and improvement** which better reflect the wide range and balance of experiences for **all** learners. This will relate to key strategic policy goals and will include ways of recognising both what is not currently measured or even measurable (notwithstanding its importance and value), as well as what is.

2.11 We need to ensure that “all learners” really does mean that. For example, pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties are currently excluded from the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). There are currently no descriptors for any levels below Entry/Foundation in the NQF or the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW). The flexibility in this Action Plan presents an opportunity to recognise the learning of this group, and others, within a national framework.

SECTION 3: CREATING THE MAP

14-19 Networks

3.1 The consultation disclosed great support for genuine partnership working. Nonetheless there is acknowledgement that at present the existing arrangements to support it are still developing and the quality of partnership is variable across Wales. We do not seek to establish new partnerships, rather to **build on good practice at local level** by strengthening and drawing on existing networks. We propose to ask ELWa-NC and local authorities to agree proposals as to how the 14-19 Network will operate in each area. In some areas the CCET, working in close liaison with the YPP, may already be undertaking a role similar to that envisaged, and in others 14-19 partnerships or consortia already exist. We do not intend that there should be duplication or that any partner should take over the work of others. Where existing mechanisms can be adapted within existing resources, they should embrace **14-19 Networks** from September 2003 to:

- settle the **way in which they will work**, to relate development at 14-16 with that post-16 devised by CCETs and YPPs for example;
- **incorporate relevant CCET annual recommendations** and the aspects of **YPP annual delivery plans** without supervening over or duplicating the functions of CCETs or YPPs themselves, ensuring planning coordination between 14-19 Networks, CCETs and YPPs;
- ensure the 14-19 development plans reflect **other planning documents** such as the Regional Statement of Needs and Priorities (RSNP), Education Strategic Plan (ESP), etc.;
- engage with young people to develop provision that **motivates and inspires** them;
- show how **specific aspects** of this Action Plan will be **implemented** at local level;
- establish common timetables and consider other means to secure **flexibility for learners** within the area such as 'learner groups' rather than 'year groups', and including access and transport;
- analyse existing option choices, develop innovative options and develop an **Option Menu** for their locality, taking account of choice for learners in rural areas, demonstrating increased choice for learners, especially in more practical and applied options, and avoiding duplication of provision;
- create opportunities – and time built in - for **young people to experience tasters** – extended if necessary - in KS3 or at the beginning of KS4 before making choices as part of an agreed strategy to help young people set goals and make choices at 14;
- seek to develop provision in **specific training centres** including local authority centres, private training providers and FE college facilities to enable more 14-16 year olds to experience high quality work focused learning;
- consider **health and safety** implications in providing wider experiences for 14-16 year olds;

- work with employers, Sector Skills Councils, Careers Wales, ELWa-NC and other partners to develop **programmes for work, community and voluntary experience** which secure high quality provision for young people;
- seek to encourage the **involvement of employers** and take up of the Basic Skills Pledge;
- consider ways to address the **training needs of learning providers** at local level;
- work with the YPP in creating and extending the **range of wider opportunities and experiences** for young people to develop and apply essential skills, including outdoor and residential experiences;
- plan the implementation of **Learning Coach** and **personal support** mechanisms for young people from September 2005 based on the recommendations of the relevant working and sub groups;
- demonstrate how **Welsh medium provision for wider options** in the area will be secured;
- consider how flexibility and choice can be extended for **learners with special educational needs**;
- each 14-19 Network should also have in place by Sept 2006 agreed protocols for the **additional support** needed to enable young people with special educational needs and others such as black and minority ethnic groups to access their entitlement to the whole range of opportunities in their own learning pathway;
- consider and **monitor option choices and achievement** for learners from black and ethnic minorities and in relation to gender stereotyping;
- develop **transition protocols** for learners moving from one Learning Coach to another, or one learning setting to another by 2006;
- **monitor and evaluate developments** to inform the Overarching 14-19 Steering Group;
- develop a **communications strategy**, in partnership with the Overarching 14-19 Steering Group, to inform all partners of local and national developments; and
- in close collaboration with the local YPP, produce an annual **Prospectus of Out of School Activities for 14-19 year olds** from September 2004 including learning and leisure activities and web based as well as published.

3.2 From 2004 we propose to support the work of the local 14-19 Networks by funding a **team of 14-19 Network Coordinators** through Careers Wales, subject to evaluation, working within groups of Network areas and with all partners in the Networks to secure flexible, high quality provision for all young people. This is intended to supplement the support already in place in many areas for aspects of these proposals.

3.3 The first **14-19 Network Development Plans**, linked to YPP annual delivery plans, CCET annual recommendations and the Regional Statement of Needs and Priorities, should be produced by September 2004. They should show how aspects of this Action Plan will be implemented locally, demonstrate how any

additional funding will be used, and be shared with the Welsh Assembly Government to inform future developments.

3.4 The Overarching 14-19 Steering Group (on which ELWa-NC and local authorities will have a prominent place) will have a role in monitoring 14-19 Network Development Plans and Option Menus developed by the 14-19 Networks to ensure learners in each locality sufficiently wide choices. Estyn will also have a significant role in judging the quality, quantity and impact of Option Menus through area inspections.

Funding

3.5 A **Financial Modelling Sub Group** of the Learning Pathways Group described in Section 4 will be established to:

- **model the application of proposals** with a ‘virtual cohort’ of young people 14-16 demonstrating estimated proportions of young people following various Learning Pathways;
- collect evidence of the **costs of various curriculum models**;
- consider the impact of the **new funding and planning system for post 16** learners;
- **audit existing funding** sources, timescales and the inter-relationship between funding streams;
- consider how to **align pre and post 16 funding** to ensure smooth transition for learners;
- consider **the impact of costs** such as accessibility and transport in implementing Learning Pathways; and
- report to inform development initially by March 2004.

3.6 This will enable analysis of funding and organisational implications to be reported by March 2004 to inform future budget plans at local and national levels. This group will draw heavily on the expertise of ADEW, WLGA, ELWa-NC and Welsh Assembly Government officials.

3.7 This Action Plan is ambitious in scope and scale, and its roll out will to some extent be conditioned by decisions taken regarding available resources at successive budget planning rounds.

Pathways to a national award

3.8 Few respondents liked the terminology we used in consultation to describe the four distinct pathways for learning: *National Traineeship*; *Combined Apprenticeship*; *Modern Apprenticeship*; and *General Apprenticeship*. However no one offered a viable alternative in answer to our request for proposals. We have concluded that it would be best for the time being to link the pathway titles to existing levels. In addition we propose that the Welsh Baccalaureate should

be adjusted on the basis of the pilot programmes. It should then become from September 2007 a **national award** at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced levels.

Foundation Pathway: Level 1

3.9 The consultation exercise showed that Foundation level programmes and qualifications are viewed as vital stepping stones to further learning. Foundation level programmes must be high quality, motivating and relevant in order to lead learners to the next stage. The Foundation Level Welsh Baccalaureate is seen as important stage in this process. A **Foundation Welsh Baccalaureate**, including qualifications at Level 1 plus the extended core, will be developed for pilot implementation from September 2005.

Intermediate Pathway: Level 2

3.10 Consultation responses indicate little support for the terms 'National Traineeship' or 'Apprenticeship' but we need to acknowledge that the **Foundation Modern Apprenticeship** is an existing work-based scheme that applies to England and Wales, with qualifications at Level 2 including Key Skills and other aspects included in the core Welsh Baccalaureate and the Continuum of Learning. We need to work with employers in Wales to ensure that young people can also access wider learning experiences to enable them to gain the **Intermediate Welsh Baccalaureate** in addition to completing their Foundation Modern Apprenticeship. Learners who achieve 5 A*-C GCSE grades or equivalent, plus the extended core would be awarded the **Intermediate Welsh Baccalaureate**.

Combination Pathway: Level 2 and Advanced: Level 3

3.11 This flexible pathway, based on the Student Apprenticeship being piloted in England at present, will combine work-based experience and school or college based study at intermediate and/or advanced level, and could also develop to incorporate opportunities for accreditation of wider skills as set out in the core to enable the award of an **Intermediate or Advanced Baccalaureate** (dependent on level of qualifications achieved).

Advanced Pathway: Level 3

3.12 Learners in 19 schools and colleges are involved in the pilots for the **Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate**. All learners taking Level 3 qualifications, including A Level, will have access to the refined award when the qualification is rolled out from 2007.

3.13 The **Modern Apprenticeship (MA)** is a well-established programme for England and Wales. Again we need to work with employers, ELWa-NC, and the

Sector Skills Councils to enable young people on a Modern Apprenticeship programme to access accreditation for wider aspects of learning and experience to enable them to be awarded the **Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate** from 2007 in addition to completing their Modern Apprenticeship. We also need to seek to extend the Shared Apprenticeship scheme in Mid Wales where apprentices are shared between several small companies none of whom could support a full time apprentice - so providing access for more young people.

3.14 We expect full implementation of the national award, refined and developed as necessary following the pilot projects and the experience of the development of the Continuum of Learning as part of Learning Pathways to commence from September 2007. It will genuinely cater for learners of all abilities and aptitudes with the flexibility to stretch the most able. These proposals will secure the coherence, breadth, balance and rigour of courses necessary to meet the high demands of Level 3 qualifications for entry to university and high level technical qualifications.

3.15 The UCAS Tariff system will shortly be extended to include the Welsh Baccalaureate being piloted in schools and colleges in Wales. The system is being developed to give visible parity of esteem to different qualifications e.g. GCE A level and AVCE qualifications. As it develops and includes an even wider range of qualifications it should support an inclusive approach to entry for HE and be capable of embracing the approach to Learning Pathways set out in this Action Plan.

Learning for all post 16

3.16 There was little support for legislation to secure the Continuum of Learning for all young people post 16, including those in employment. There is a general view that this is more likely to happen by securing the support of employers to the whole project. The credibility of the Welsh Baccalaureate at all levels will be crucial factor in encouraging young people to continue learning after the age of 16.

3.17 However, there is a **statutory Right for Time Off to Study or Train for 16 and 17 Year Olds** up to Level 2. Take up at present is low so we will need to work with learners, Careers Wales, ELWa-NC, Wales TUC and employers to increase use of this entitlement. The promotional campaign proposed in Section 1 should include this entitlement. We will also consider how small and medium enterprises (SMEs) might be encouraged and supported to enable their staff to take up this entitlement.

Widening Access to Higher Education

3.18 Our full proposals for developing the Higher Education (HE) sector in Wales – including **extending opportunities to experience HE** – are set out in our strategy for the sector, '*Reaching Higher*'. In '*Reaching Higher*', we include a long-term vision for HE and a series of outcomes against which - subject to further refinement - our performance can be measured. It is increasingly apparent that to achieve our objectives for widening access we must target young people from disadvantaged circumstances at a younger age and work to improve progression through the education system. To achieve this we have, amongst other things:

- launched '*AimHigher Wales*'. This high tech roadshow and associated website will help **raise young people's interest** in higher education from a younger age;
- supported outreach projects across Wales. We shall continue to fund the widening access partnerships set up with additional funding in 2002-03. Through these projects, institutions are working together to **target people from under represented groups**. They are working with schools, further education institutions, community groups and parents to ensure that higher education opportunities are available to all those able to benefit;
- encouraged HEFCW to appoint a **national widening access co-ordinator**. The co-ordinator will work with higher education institutions to ensure that widening access initiatives across Wales are complementary and will look to share good practice;
- targeted an **increased take-up of Assembly Learning Grants** for learners post 18; and
- agreed with UCAS to **develop the tariff system** to recognise achievement in the developing system in Wales. UCAS states that Higher Education Institutions support both certificated Key Skills and more informal evidence of skills achievement, for example, through the personal statement on the UCAS application form.

SECTION 4: LEARNING PATHWAYS

Developing Learning Pathways

4.1 The successful development of these ideas will depend on the extent to which those who are asked to implement these radical proposals are involved in their development. If ideas are to be realised with and for young people and those who work with them we need to find ways to harness the **expertise and experience available in Wales** and elsewhere, and to test the developing ideas with as many people as possible, especially those who know what works, and including learners themselves. **Employers in all sectors** have a vital contribution to make to the development and delivery of Learning Pathways. The role of the emerging **Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)** will be essential in this area and help to ensure that employers are engaged in the process. We hope interested parties throughout Wales will continue to support and contribute to partnership working through membership of or contribution to a range of working groups to refine the detail of the Learning Pathways that are at the heart of these developments.

4.2 This is an enormous task, so we suggest a number of short-term sub groups, reporting to and closely linked with the Learning Pathways Group. Whilst the Overarching 14-19 Steering Group will maintain overall strategic oversight, the **Learning Pathways Group and its sub groups will need to be both strategic and operational**, and to maintain a clear focus on how things will actually work in learning settings throughout Wales. There should be sufficient common membership between groups to **maintain continuity** without becoming introspective.

4.3 The **Learning Pathways Group** will:

- **coordinate the work of the sub groups** undertaking the specific tasks detailed in this Action Plan;
- refine more specifically the criteria which will constitute an appropriate Learning Pathway by September 2003, ensuring the **design of learning pathways** includes balance to be demonstrated between knowledge, practical application and essential skills over whole pathway (rather than necessarily within individual option choices), supporting parity of esteem between various options, and encouraging take up of an applied option (see below);
- develop mechanisms for **mapping out these criteria** in ways that make sense to learners, parents and providers;
- offer guidance on the overall **volume of individual programmes** at all levels and abilities to avoid overloaded or underweight Learning Pathways;
- offer guidance on how learners can **access choices** to which young people should be entitled, including applied options and modern foreign languages;

- identify ways to ensure learners can **choose provision** from a number of providers;
- develop examples of **'taster' units** or courses to help young people make informed choices;
- consider how to secure for all learners opportunity and experience to acquire **essential skills** including the Key Skills whilst offering choice of experience in work, community or voluntary activity;
- produce for illustration **exemplar Learning Pathways** to show how a wide range of options catering for all abilities, including those with disabilities and special educational needs might look, by January 2004;
- include safeguards to ensure **equal opportunities** for learners on grounds of gender, race, sexual orientation, etc and social inclusion and to look at ways to secure choice in rural areas;
- consider **delivery mechanisms** including e-learning, learning styles, thinking skills and learning to learn;
- provide a framework for the development of the role of the **Learning Coach** including regular reviews to focus work and to pick up need for support, or a change of direction;
- ensure that learners can **change direction** between different routes if their goals and aspirations change;
- consider how to support the development of opportunities in **Welsh medium / bilingual provision**;
- **test ideas** with the Young People's Advisory Group;
- **consult 14-19 Networks** about the development of Learning Pathways;
- develop and refine the **Work/Community/Voluntary Experience Plan** (Annex B) in conjunction with each of the sub groups to identify opportunities for essential and Key Skill development and recognition through opportunities and experience; and
- look at ways to secure **quality assurance procedures** for Learning Pathways in all settings.

4.4 We will ask ACCAC to advise on how the **statutory requirements at KS4** might be revised to provide greater flexibility to ensure they better reflect the needs and interests of a wider range of pupils and achieve a closer fit with Key Skills.

4.5 Learning Pathways should be phased in from September 2005 onwards, according to local timetables developed by 14-19 Networks and set out in their annual development plans. All young people should be on a Learning Pathway that meets the criteria developed by the Group from September 2007.

Parity of esteem

4.6 The principle of parity of esteem between so-called 'vocational' and 'academic' choices is fundamental to success. We take the widest possible interpretation of 'vocational', and it is not our intention to narrow the choices of

14-16 year olds in Wales to one specific vocational route. The term 'vocational' is widely used in qualifications such as NVQ, but the term 'part 1 GNVQ' will gradually be replaced with Applied GCSEs. We propose to adopt wherever possible the generic term '**applied**' for the more practical aspects of the options available, to include those options currently called 'vocational' and others that will reflect more practical approaches.

4.7 All learners should be offered an **applied option** in Learning Pathways 14-16 from Sept 2005 with a wide range of qualifications available to support it.

Tasters to inform choices

4.8 There is considerable support for the idea of offering all young people a **taster period** at the end of Key Stage 3, or the beginning of Key Stage 4 – for some perhaps even a taster year, during which they could experience a range of subject and vocational options to see which best fit their aptitudes, interests and learning styles. It would be possible to offer accreditation for relevant taster experience that would add to the learner's portfolio through the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales. This would improve retention rates and enhance motivation. Taster periods will be piloted from 2004.

Developing the Continuum of Learning

4.9 A **Continuum of Learning Sub Group** of the Learning Pathways Group, led by ACCAC, will be established to produce authoritative guidance that relates to the wider aspects of learning across the 14-19 phase. This work will include:

- monitoring against the **current requirements in the Core** of the Welsh Baccalaureate;
- assessing the **relationship with Personal and Social Education (PSE) Guidance 14-16**;
- examining the **relationship with Work Related Education (WRE) Guidance 14-19**;
- monitoring the **relationship with Careers Education Guidance (CEG)**;
- undertaking more detailed work on **PSE post 16** to link with the PSE aspects of the Welsh Baccalaureate Core;
- devising more explicit links to be drawn with **Key Skills**;
- introducing **accreditation opportunities** relevant to the above;
- making **links with the Work Focused Experience Sub Group and Community and the Voluntary Experience Sub Group** to link these experiences with the above;
- coordinating the refinement and agreement of the **Work/Community/Voluntary Experience Plan** by the sub groups, employers' representatives and community and voluntary sector representatives to ensure it supports development and records experience and skills;

- more **explicit links with work based learning**; and
- consider the relationship between the Continuum of Learning and the **Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales**.

Developing all aspects of Work Focused Experience

4.10 A **Work Focused Experience Sub Group** of the Learning Pathways Group will be set up to work with employers, training providers, Careers Wales companies, ELWa-NC, Sector Skills Councils, other agencies and in partnership with local 14-19 Networks, to undertake the following tasks:

- **link with Continuum of Learning Sub Group and Community and Voluntary Experience Sub Group** to ensure consistent development of coherent package;
- develop **capacity for work focused experience**, including work with local networks to analyse capacity and development issues, based on projections produced by Finance Modelling Group;
- analyse how the contribution of **young people’s part time employment** might be counted.
- consider how the possibilities offered by **existing training centres** could be further developed to enhance work experience and work based learning, particularly for 14-16 year olds;
- advise on ways to secure **access to relevant work experience for learners of all abilities** including those with disabilities or special educational needs;
- adapt Ufl/LearnDirect “Learning through Work” or similar **accreditation** vehicles to make it appropriate **for young people’s experience in part-time employment and work experience**;
- encourage further development of more **specific and focused enterprise activities** and opportunities to improve the understanding of enterprise and business, so that in depth, accredited enterprise projects could count as work experience and make a contribution to the acquisition of wider essential skills through the Work/Community/Voluntary Experience Plan;
- seek to secure **the involvement of the National Assembly for Wales** and other public sector bodies in supporting schools through providing work experience, supporting the curriculum through involvement in projects and individual mentoring which would be seen as integral part of staff development.
- consider how scope and accessibility can be enhanced for young people in **rural areas**;
- suggest ways to increase the **involvement of employers** in all sectors and act as advocates and ambassadors to enhance this involvement, with ELWA-NC’s role in Education Business Links playing a significant part in this development;
- develop criteria for an **award for good practice for employers**, with significant public relations and media support – including sponsorship and the potential of leading to a major event for an annual presentation;

- work to develop a **national database of work placement providers**, quality assured by Careers Wales, including health and safety vetting, to widen the opportunities made available to learners;
- explore the potential of **residential work experience** within Wales and abroad, particularly for post 16 learners; and
- support the work of the WDA and Careers Wales in working with employers in the public, private and voluntary sectors on a local basis to develop **specific programmes**, with potential for accreditation for short, medium and long term work placements particularly for 14-16 year olds.

Developing Community and Volunteering Opportunities

4.11 A **Community and Voluntary Experience Sub Group** to work with national and local community and voluntary organisations to:

- **link with the Continuum of Learning and the Work Focused Experience Sub Groups** to ensure consistent development of a coherent package;
- work with local 14-19 Networks to develop **appropriate packages of voluntary and community activities** as part of the choices available to learners to fulfil the requirements of a Learning Pathway;
- use the refined Work/Community/Voluntary Experience Plan to **ensure quality and breadth of experience**;
- develop plans for **capacity building** in these sectors to meet anticipated local demand;
- consider how scope and accessibility can be overcome for young people in **rural areas**;
- consider how opportunities to include the **natural world and environmental and sustainability issues** can be developed; and
- support **pilot programmes** to begin from September 2004, and wider programmes phased in from September 2005 as part of local 14-19 Network development plan.

4.12 It is important that voluntary activity **is** voluntary – it would be counterproductive to make such experience compulsory. A wide variety of voluntary experience should include the chance of residential experiences as well as local opportunities.

4.13 We recognise that the **capacity of the voluntary sector** will need to be strengthened to accommodate these developments and will seek to make funding available to organisations who make a significant contribution to the provision available to young people through 14-19 Networks.

SECTION 5: ASSESSMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS

Assessment for learning

5.1 Assessment should assist the learner in their future development as much as inform others of the level attained. All learners should have the opportunity to develop their ability to evaluate their own learning. The processes of assessment are crucial to motivating learners and encouraging them to remain in learning. The development of flexible options, 'bite-size' units, smooth transition routes and quality, accessible support, and information, advice and guidance are widely recognised as key to maintaining learners' involvement and progression.

5.2 There is overwhelming support for the need to make better use of more varied assessment methods and points, whilst ensuring that continuous assessment processes should not be allowed to become burdensome and clumsy. There is also recognition that teacher assessment must be rigorous and supported by external monitoring.

5.3 In all settings the following **principles** should be the basis for assessment:

- *self-motivated learning* as the main goal for all;
- *assessment for learning*, in support of self-motivated learning, and progressively improving teaching;
- *summative testing that is fit for purpose*, designed to supply evidence of attainment that is useful for clearly defined purposes; and
- *using test results for accountability purposes* in the context of a broad and balanced approach to the purpose of education overall.

Qualifications

5.4 Qualifications achieved by learners in Wales must have status, currency and validity throughout the UK and the wider world. They need to be understood and valued by Higher Education and employers to secure access for all those young people who seek it. We will continue to work with colleagues elsewhere in the UK with a view to developing, in the longer term, **a unitised qualifications framework**, recognised across the board and leading to the award of the Welsh Baccalaureate in Wales.

5.5 We will ask ACCAC, working with QCA and CCEA, to provide advice on:

- increasing the **range of GCSE courses** available, based on needs analysis and market testing, to ensure they better reflect the needs and interests of 14-16 year olds;
- development of more **hybrid courses**, where a core module is supplemented by a choice of academic or practical and applied elements;

- **unitisation for all or most GCSEs** leading to greater flexibility in the size and options within GCSE qualifications (e.g. 'short', single and double awards to be available across more subjects);
- **reducing the overall burden** of internal and external assessment;
- the advantages and disadvantages of increasing the **number of assessment opportunities** available throughout Y10 and Y11;
- monitoring developments in GNVQ to ensure **smooth transition** to Applied GCSE, where appropriate;
- the **replacement qualifications** for the intermediate and foundation GNVQ full awards; and
- the implications of the **review of vocational qualifications** for 14-19 year olds.

5.6 ACCAC will continue to work closely with QCA in England and CCEA in Northern Ireland on all developments affecting all external qualifications. The implementation of the two Tomlinson reports is being taken forward on a three country basis. However, the overarching advanced award in Wales is predicated on Level 3 qualifications and will accommodate the outcomes of work on A levels as well as a wider range of Level 3 qualifications.

Continuity and progression in skills

5.7 *'Future Skills' Wales* identifies the wide range of skills valued by employers and which they consider essential to employment opportunities and successful business practice. In partnership with employers we shall seek to **ensure young people have the skills they need for success in life and work**.

5.8 We consider that **skill continuums**, showing how progress in essential skills is demonstrated, would provide useful guidance for young people. These should not become checklists or drive bureaucratic assessment procedures, but could provide useful benchmarks for measuring the improved performance of learners and learning settings in some of the wider demands now being made. This will need to be considered in developing the future system of indicators described in Section 1 to be developed to judge progress. A range of models for such development exists in, for example, Key Skills competences, and work done at local level on literacy skills.

Credit and Qualifications Framework

5.9 The Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CFQW), currently under development, will encourage more young people and adults living in Wales to participate in learning by **enabling small learning achievements to be recognised and rewarded**. More flexible learning opportunities, available in manageable chunks, achieved incrementally and with national recognition, as offered by CFQW, can give individuals the motivation they need to upgrade their skills. These achievements of credit can be recognised in their own right or

accumulated towards other qualifications, allowing both young people and adults – whatever their abilities and circumstances - to learn in a manner that suits their needs. As well as offering learners credit for qualifications within the National Qualification Framework, credit will be extended to reflect achievement of voluntary qualifications and achievement through prior and informal learning. Progressive roll-out of CQFW will be a gradual process, and the ELWa-NC, ACCAC and HEFCW will continue to work with education providers, awarding bodies, other regulatory authorities, sector skills councils, and informal and non-formal networks to further develop the CFQW, in line with the implementation plan, from May 2003. CQFW is an evolving and developing structure with the aim of having the essential building blocks established by 2006.

5.10 Whatever accreditation process is used, it needs to have **credibility and value with learners**. Recognition of accreditation by **parents, employers and Higher Education** is also crucial. The CQFW will be robust enough to achieve these goals, and to give learners, employers and providers the assurance of quality that they need.

Assessment, recording and reporting

5.11 **Progress File** is generally accepted by respondents as the basis for development and recording of learners' opportunities, experiences, goals and aspirations, though it will need to be reviewed and refined to meet the needs of the developing 14-19 agenda in Wales. It should also be used to assist young people in evaluating their own progress and experiences.

5.12 Progress File will continue to be made available to all year 9 pupils in hard copy in 2003-4. From April 2004 we intend that it will be available in hard copy for 50 per cent of the cohort and in e-format on Careers Wales Online to be used by all learners to help them take responsibility for their learning and development. From April 2005 it is anticipated that all young people will be able to access materials through Careers Wales Online.

5.13 A **review of the materials** is planned for 2005-6 to ensure that they meet the requirements of full implementation of Learning Pathways. The future development of Progress File as a manageable but flexible tool needs to be considered alongside the range of other recording systems for example the Duke of Edinburgh Award record, Ufi's 'The Organiser', Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification records, Key Skills records, City and Guilds Profile of Achievement, to develop links, and identify the best practice.

5.14 Respondents also want Progress File to be available for young people below the age of 14.

5.15 We will also review the **statutory arrangements for reporting progress at Key Stage 4** to ensure that young people's involvement in and responsibility

for their own learning, for example through Progress File, is properly reflected in reporting mechanisms.

SECTION 6: SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

Information, advice and guidance

6.1 High quality, impartial **information, advice and guidance** services for young people are clearly vital in enabling young people to take advantage of any developments and to make informed and realistic choices. The Assembly currently supports a number of **web-based information services** including Canllaw Online, National Grid for Learning Wales (NGfL Cymru), ELWa-NC, LearnDirect and the planned Careers Wales Online that will be vehicles for taking forward the provision of information, advice and guidance to young people about the opportunities available to them. Links should be created between all sources of information to ensure **a one-stop-shop for information** on all aspects of learning and training which would help learners, parents, Learning Coach and others to make informed choices based on up-to-date information. Young people also have a right to impartial, high quality **advice on career choices** from Careers Wales advisers.

Learning Coach

6.2 There is overwhelming support for the concept of **additional support for learners** over identifying goals and making informed choices for appropriate Learning Pathways, and supporting and reviewing their progress and direction at intervals. We acknowledge that a great deal of support and information is already available to young people through a variety of sources, including form and subject teachers, careers advisers, mentors, youth workers, families, friends and the media. In the most successful private training provision, significant effort is put into support for learners, with commensurate results. The strong support for this role is balanced by concern about the logistics of delivery. There is also the recognition that no single person – or profession – would have the full range of information necessary, or the knowledge available or the skills to undertake the full potential demands of this role.

6.3 We should work towards the position **where all learners would have access to a Learning Coach** – a champion for the learners under their wing - who, in coordination with the team of other people already working with the young people in question e.g. their form tutor, subject teachers, careers adviser, youth worker, sports coach, mentor, community experience supervisor and so on (any of whom might be a Learning Coach for some learners), would be able to ascertain whether their chosen Learning Pathway met the required criteria and was appropriate to meet the needs and help achieve the goals of the individual learner. The **credibility of a Learning Coach with the learner** is an essential aspect of this support. Unless the learner gives sanction to the support, advice and guidance offered, this resource will not be efficient or effective.

6.4 The role of Learning Coach is not a new one and already forms part of what careers advisors and many teachers and heads of year in schools do already. The key here is to recognise and identify this function, integrating it with the objectives of this Action Plan, but without it becoming an addition to teachers' workload.

6.5 It is not necessarily envisaged that there would be many full time Learning Coaches, except perhaps for those young people who need intensive additional support combining the role of Learning Coach and more intensive personal support such as currently offered through Youth Gateway and Youth Access.

6.6 For those young people who are in **learning or employment outside the school or college** setting, **Careers Wales Advisers** might assume the role of Learning Coach, working with relevant partners in the young person's learning.

6.7 There is considerable support for the idea that young people should have access to Learning Coach support earlier than the age of 14 – perhaps from year 7 (age 11) onwards, and there is a widely supported view that the identification of a 'significant' person for young people in relation to their learning would be cost effective in the long term

Development of Learning Coach Support

6.8 A **survey of current support mechanisms and capacity** will be carried out to report by October 2003. The outcomes of the survey will inform the work of the Learning Coach Sub Group. This study will also consider the potential for capacity for this additional support for learning choices, goals and pathways to be created by considering the balance of direct curriculum delivery time and the beneficial effects of supporting young people more with the whole learning process, self study etc.

6.9 A multi-agency **Learning Coach Sub Group** will be set up to:

- establish the **basic support mechanisms** learners need;
- clarify the **skill and knowledge set** required to deliver this support;
- identify the **different professionals** who might have this skill and knowledge set, and the training needs for those who need additional skills;
- consider how the **diverse needs of learners** including those who are disengaged, those from black and minority ethnic groups and learners with special educational needs should be supported;
- consider **systems for tracking learners**, including taking account of the Information Sharing and Keeping in Touch Guidance produced for YPPs;
- consider a generic **distance learning qualification** for a Learning Coach;
- consider the **recommendations of the capacity study** for implementation of the role;

- consider **imaginative and innovative ways to supplement face-to-face support**, e.g. e-contact, text message support, helplines (such as LearnDirect etc.); and
- consider ways to **involve young people** in the development and evaluation of the role.

6.10 Local 14-19 Networks should develop plans to phase in the role of Learning Coach as part of local development plan from September 2005 onwards, according to need, with all learners, including those with special educational needs, having appropriate Learning Coach support by September 2007.

Personal Support

6.11 A **Personal Support Sub Group** should be set up to look at ways to ensure learners have access to a wide range of personal support when they need it, including to:

- collect and disseminate **good practice examples** of multi-disciplinary approaches to personal support to help 14-19 Networks and individual learning settings address personal support issues for young people;
- develop examples of **team approaches** offering a range of expertise such as are already in place in some areas of Wales;
- consider how access to support could be facilitated for **young people with diverse needs** including those who are disengaged, those from black and minority ethnic groups and those with special educational needs;
- link with **developments/guidance for young parents** to be produced in 2003;
- consider the implementation and implications of the **Keeping in Touch protocols** to be developed by the YPPs, to make sure that young people not in education, employment or training have the opportunity to take up opportunities;
- work with YPPs to secure **continuity of personal support** when and where young people want it;
- consider the potential of **existing accredited peer support programmes** such as Senior Member Training in Youth Work, and programmes from Scouts and Girl Guiding;
- consider **imaginative and innovative approaches to provision of support**, such as the availability of 24/7 telephone helplines with highly trained skilled counsellors who could deal with personal issues;
- develop ways in which **young people can be involved** in developing and evaluating this support; and
- work towards a national **good practice sharing conference** to be held Autumn 2003.

6.12 From September 2004, learning settings will be asked to demonstrate how they intend to address the personal support for learners according to need as

part of local 14-19 Network development plan, together with the YPP annual delivery plan, showing how this support will be developed over the next 3 years pending full implementation of Learning Pathways from September 2007.

6.13 This may have implications for other age groups and work on reviewing the Education Welfare Service will be taken forward in 2003-4 as one of the recommendations of the Attendance Task and Finish Group. There will also be links with developments in Communities First Partnerships and through the Age Balanced Communities Action Plan and Rural Communities Action programme.

SECTION 7: QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality Assurance

7.1 Whatever our intentions over extending option choice for learners, no amount of flexibility will compensate for poor quality provision. The development of relevant, well-delivered and interesting learning experiences that have intrinsic benefit to learners will be the best way to keep people in learning.

7.2 14-19 Coordinators will work with employers and the voluntary/community sector to **develop quality programmes for work experience, community and volunteering experiences**. The Work Focused Experience and Community and Voluntary Experience Sub Groups will provide the framework within which this should be developed, and local development will need to be part of the work of 14-19 Networks, together with Careers Wales, ELWa-NC and the developing work of the Sector Skills Councils in Wales.

7.3 We shall establish new more rounded ways of **judging school and college performance and the performance of other learning settings** including value added, enrichment of provision, delivery of wider skills and experience, and catering for all abilities to be developed by April 2004. A system of indicators of progress will enable providers to measure what they value and to identify what makes the difference for young people. The hope is that this should be captured for the quantitative and qualitative dimensions in a new visual 'pentagram' format similar to that being devised for universities and Home Office sponsored funding.

7.4 Estyn will begin a programme of **area inspections** starting in January 2004 that will include judgement about how local plans for 14-19 are progressing and how they are affecting learners. Youth Support Services and the work of YPPs will also be inspected from September 2004. Local area inspections and inspections of individual institutions will inform the future planning process within CCETs. Estyn inspections of individual learning settings and youth support services will also include judgement on the implementation of these proposals from April 2004.

7.5 ELWa-NC has a statutory duty to secure the provision of education and training that is of adequate quality to meet the needs of learners. To fulfil this duty, ELWa-NC is in the process of establishing a **quality framework** that will include monitoring of quality, performance and standards in all the learning it funds. ELWa-NC is working closely with Estyn to ensure that issues and shortcomings identified by inspectors are addressed via an ongoing programme of quality improvement, including staff development activities for providers. Arrangements have been put into place to support providers in improving poor practice, and to withdraw funding from providers that fail to improve within agreed timescales. The process will be further developed and refined over the next two years.

7.6 During 2003, ELWa-NC will commission research to map the range of quality frameworks which learning providers are subject to, including the ELWa-NC's own requirements, Estyn inspection framework, Investors in People and the European Foundation for Quality Management. This is intended to assist providers in undertaking self-assessment, and to identify areas of overlap and duplication.

7.7 In its turn, HEFCW has just issued a circular which set out the core principles, requirements and key features of a new **quality assurance and standards framework which is to be adopted for HE** providers in Wales from academic year 2003/04 onwards.

7.8 We are convinced by the evidence from the consultation and from the good practice we seen already that we have an Action Plan that has all the ingredients for success over quality assurance, but we are conscious that it must be put to the test and must prove its worth to learners, learning providers and learning settings. Quality assurance in all settings is crucial to the success of our young people in the future.

Annex A

Timetable for Implementation: subject to decisions taken regarding available resources at successive budget planning rounds, the work of the sub-groups and on-going review by the Overarching 14-19 Steering Group to ensure smooth implementation informed by best practice

	2003-4	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8
Planning and Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14-19 Project Leader appointed • Standing Groups established <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overarching 14-19 Steering Group - Young People's Advisory Group - Local 14-19 Networks • Task and Finish Groups established <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learning Pathways Group - Financial Modelling Sub Group - Continuum of Learning Sub Group - Work Focused Experience Sub Group - Community and Voluntary Experience Sub Group - Personal Support Sub Group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14-19 network coordinators appointed • New funding formula applied to LEAs • First 14-19 network Development Plans produced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Pathways phased in from September 2005 onwards according to local 14-19 network Development Plan • Learning Coach accreditation developed • Personal support phased in according to 14-19 network Development Plans 		

<p>National Events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conference on learning style and theory • Personal support good practice sharing conference 				
<p>Pilots</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on system of indicators to show progress and to overarching aspirational target and improvement of learners and learning settings • Intermediate and Advanced Welsh Baccalaureate pilots begin • Development of Foundation Welsh Baccalaureate begins • Intermediate / Advanced combined pathway (student apprenticeship) pilot • Learning Coach pilots • Initial analysis of options choices to inform Option Menus • Young people begin to be involved in all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Pathways pilots using criteria developed by Learning Pathways Group • Continuum of Learning pilots including recommendations from Work Focused Experience and Community and Voluntary Experience Sub Groups • Pilot work on community schools following consultation • Personal support pilots • Option Menus developed by 14-19 networks • Pilot taster sessions for young people end KS3 beginning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Widespread Learning Pathway pilots in all 14-19 networks • Review of Welsh Baccalaureate pilots so far alongside developments in Continuum of Learning • Foundation Welsh Baccalaureate begins 		

	<p>plans that concern them, including requirement on local authorities to consult pupils about decisions on school provision which affect them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive e-format Progress File pilot • Roll out of <i>AimHigher Wales</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of Widening Access Coordinator - Continuation of Widening Access Partnerships 	<p>KS4 before they make their choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Intermediate Welsh Baccalaureate • Foundation Welsh Baccalaureate pilot begins • Out of School Hours Prospectus produced 			
Curriculum and organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidated advice from ACCAC on the whole of the national curriculum including advice on review of GCSE requirements • <i>School of the Future</i> recommendations on school organisation and calendar developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependent on advice provided in March 2004, ACCAC review of statutory requirements 14-16 reports • Guidance on skill continuums produced by ACCAC • Implementation of common timetables and innovative approaches to delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised National Curriculum Orders for 14-16 year olds sent to schools • Most learners offered an applied option from age 14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin implementing new statutory arrangements for 14-16 from September 2006, preparation of new GCSE courses (dependent on work with QCA and CCEA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin implementation of new GCSE courses (subject to work in 3 countries) • All young people have full Learning Pathway options from extensive Option Menus

<p>Assessment, qualifications and recording</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCAC plus QCA and CCEA continue work on national qualifications framework and assessment developments • Progress File available in hard copy to all Year 9 pupils • NQF and CQFW further developed from 2003 - for learners with severe/complex needs, look at how 'small steps' for these learners could be recognised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress File available in interactive e-format, 50 per cent hard copies still available for transition • Continuing unitisation of existing qualifications • Continuation of Widening Access Partnerships in HE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Year 9 learners have access to interactive e-format Progress File • Review of Progress File to ensure it is fit for purpose in the context of Learning Pathways • Compulsory designation of size indicator and level for units in all qualifications at Levels 1-3 excluding NVQs • Continuation of Widening Access Partnerships in HE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Year 9 and 10 learners have access to revised e-format Progress File • Compulsory designation of size indicator and level for units in all qualifications at Entry Level and higher levels excluding NVQs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All learners 14-19 have access to revise e-format Progress File • Refined Welsh Baccalaureate extended to all learners at Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced levels • Statutory reporting arrangements including involvement of learners in recording and reporting • Compulsory designation of size indicators and level for units for NVQs and other occupational qualifications
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				continuity of additional support for young people with SEN to access their entitlement developed by 14-19 networks	support <ul style="list-style-type: none">All learners have access to comprehensive web-based information
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Annex B

Work/Community/Voluntary Experience Plan

This Plan forms the basis for developing quality programmes of experience for young people. To be productive, workplace learning must offer opportunities for the student/trainee to receive effective preparation for work and learning in an environment which is linked to business development practices and outcomes. Opportunities must be of high quality and most cost effective.

The plan and its implementation must have a high degree of commitment from employers and learning providers and wherever possible the learning outcomes should be capable of recognition at national and international standards.

The Plan

Induction Period

Structured workplace induction that covers:

- the company/organisation, its products/aims, policies and key people
- health and safety
- equal opportunities
- employment responsibilities and rights
- sustainable development
- quality assurance systems

Occupational Skills

Job 'know-how' needs to be defined in relation to the systems and outputs of specific organisations and the operational and customer knowledge that exists within them. A general approach of analysing best practice in industry and learning should be supported by:

- technical skills and knowledge
- NVQ units at Level 2
- NVQ units at Level 3

Essential Skills

Key Skills

- communication
- application of number
- IT
- problem solving
- teamworking, how people work in teams and organise projects
- ability to learn

handle uncertainty and risk
 enterprise capability
 leadership skills
 ability to follow instructions
 showing initiative
 understanding customer needs

Note: essential skills, including Key Skills, must be fully integrated into the delivery of occupational skills

Employers must have staff who:

- understand the educational curriculum
- can interface with learning providers
- have good coaching skills (standards set by employment NTO)
- can be workplace mentors
- can be workplace assessors

Schools/colleges/learning providers must have staff who:

- understand the workplace
- understand and empathise with the needs of employers
- can provide mentor support to employers
- can undertake assessment and/or support workplace assessors
- can undertake and/or support coaching in the workplace
- can support essential skills, including Key Skills, in the workplace