



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru The National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc The Children and Young People Committee

**Dydd Mercher, 9 Ionawr 2013
Wednesday, 9 January 2013**

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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal,
cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.
In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol Committee members in attendance

Angela Burns	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Christine Chapman	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)
Jocelyn Davies	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Rebecca Evans	Llafur Labour

Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Aled Roberts	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Simon Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

**Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance**

Kate Crabtree	Pennaeth Rheoleiddio a Chymwysterau, Llywodraeth Cymru Head of Regulation and Qualifications, Welsh Government
Huw Evans	Cadeirydd yr Adolygiad o Gymwysterau ar gyfer Pobl Ifanc 14 i 19 Oed yng Nghymru Chair of the Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales

**Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance**

Chloë Davies	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Claire Morris	Clerc Clerk
Anne Thomas	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

*Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.16 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.16 a.m.*

**Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions**

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the first meeting of the Children and Young People Committee of 2013. I remind Members to switch off mobile phones or BlackBerrys. We have apologies this morning from Lynne Neagle and Suzy Davies.

**Adolygiad o Gymwysterau ar gyfer Pobl Ifanc 14 i 19 Oed yng Nghymru
Review of Qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales**

[2] **Christine Chapman:** I welcome Huw Evans, the chair of the review of qualifications for 14 to 19-year-olds in Wales. Thank you, Huw, for attending; the report that you have produced has been discussed throughout Wales, and I know that the Members are very much looking forward to discussing this issue with you again this morning.

[3] I also welcome Kate Crabtree, the head of regulation and qualifications in the Welsh Government. Welcome to you both. Are you happy for us to go straight into questions, Huw, or would you like to say a few words?

[4] **Mr Evans:** I am very happy to go straight to questions, unless you want me to give a quick overview. I am sure that everybody at the table has already read the report and picked

out bits from it, so I am happy to go to questions.

[5] **Christine Chapman:** Okay, thank you. I will start off this morning. What do you think are the main challenges of establishing a Welsh qualifications system that diverges from the three-country approach to qualifications?

[6] **Mr Evans:** We came up with that recommendation because we felt that it was in the best interests of Wales and learners in Wales. It is a very important decision, because, historically, we have always worked in alignment as part of a three-country system, and moving to work on our own is quite a significant departure. However, it is a departure that I think is in line with devolved policy, and it is very much in line with the direction of travel here in Wales.

[7] Also, as a committee, when we were discussing this recommendation, we felt that we had little choice, because we felt that it was England that was diverging from us, from the established way of doing things in Wales, and we were not sure whether the direction of travel that was being proposed in outline in England—I have not as yet seen the details of what is being proposed in England; we pick up reports in the press et cetera—was appropriate for Wales and whether the risk involved in taking that course of action was not too great.

[8] So, the challenge, as far as we are concerned, is very much about setting up our own regulatory functions here, and that is why we recommended that Qualifications Wales be established. Clearly, the Minister has selected that out of the 42 recommendations—he has already pronounced on Qualifications Wales. We feel that that is an important part of the gel and the mix to get it right, to ensure that standards are maintained in Wales and that we have a qualification system within Wales that is world-class.

[9] So, the future of Qualifications Wales is very important in terms of regulating and running our own affairs, but I feel that, as a country, we must have the confidence to be able to do these things as well as, if not better, than any other part of the UK.

[10] Another challenge is to make sure that we communicate all of this effectively to universities and employers not just across the UK, but across the rest of the world in terms of what we are doing here. Communication has not always been our strength, and sometimes people still talk about O-levels and all the rest of it. Change in the educational setting does not come that easily, so we have to pay communication some attention as we move forward.

[11] **Christine Chapman:** We will be picking up on some of the specifics of that issue later. Could you say something about what you feel are the implications for the Welsh Joint Education Committee with the change?

[12] **Mr Evans:** We regard the WJEC as a key partner within Qualifications Wales, because we initially see Qualifications Wales as being a regulating body for Wales. However, we would envisage Qualifications Wales becoming the major awarding body for Wales as well, particularly in the 14 to 16 phase and particularly with regard to general qualifications. Currently, the WJEC has approximately 80% of the market, if not slightly more, and we would see it coming in as part of this new national body, of which we can hopefully all be proud. I see the future of the WJEC as being a quite fundamental part of that body.

[13] **Christine Chapman:** One of the things that you looked at was the Scottish model. What did you feel were the main strengths of the Scottish model for the regulating and awarding of qualifications?

[14] **Mr Evans:** We have looked at the Scottish model; we spent some time in Scotland. The Scottish model has all the characteristics of a world-class system. It is a system that has

been defined in Scotland in a way that is easily understood, and in which learners, by and large, understand what is happening. There is built-in progression within the system that is understood. There is flexibility in terms of control within the system. There is also integrity and rigour within the system. We were very impressed with the way that they were doing things in Scotland.

[15] In Scotland, we also found out how they had managed to separate the awarding function from the regulatory function, which we feel is very important and relevant for Wales as well, because there must be a very clear divide between regulation and award. They have been doing this in Scotland for years, and I think it is something that we can learn from.

[16] **Aled Roberts:** Mae hyn o gryn ddi-ddordeb i mi gan fod fy mab hynaf yn sefyll arholiad TGAU y bore yma, ac rwy'n gobeithio y bydd yn gwneud yn iawn. Mae'r bwrdd adolygu wedi penderfynu ei fod am aros efo strwythur TGAU a Safon Uwch yn hytrach na symud i system newydd. Beth oedd y prif resymau dros y penderfyniad hwnnw?

Aled Roberts: This is of great interest to me as my eldest son is sitting a GCSE exam this morning, and I hope that he will do well. The review board has decided to keep the GCSE and A-level structure rather than move to a new system. What were the main reasons for that decision?

[17] **Mr Evans:** Y prif reswm ar ddiwedd y dydd oedd y dystiolaeth. Rydym wedi cymryd tystiolaeth gref ac wedi siarad gyda channoedd os nad miloedd o fyfyrwyr, cyflogwyr ac athrawon dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf. Roedd y dystiolaeth yn gryf iawn o blaid cadw TGAU. Nid yw hynny'n golygu nad oes gwendidau yn system TGAU, ac rwy'n credu mai'r her gyda TGAU yng Nghymru yw addasu'r hyn sy'n mynd ymlaen gyda TGAU. Er enghraifft, mae Lloegr yn symud i'r *English Baccalaureate*, a dim ond nifer fach o bynciau fydd yn rhan ohonynt. Nid oeddwn yn teimlo y byddai hynny'n gyfeiriad addas i bobl ifanc Cymru. Rwyf hefyd yn credu y byddai'n gadael allan cyfran fawr iawn o fyfyrwyr na fyddai'n dilyn y math hwnnw o gwrs. Felly, nid oeddem yn teimlo fel bwrdd bod gennym yr opsiynau i wneud rhywbeth yn wahanol. Y cyfeiriad yr oeddem yn teimlo oedd yn bwysig i'w ddilyn oedd addasu a chryfhau'r hyn sy'n mynd ymlaen ar y funud.

Mr Evans: The main reason was ultimately the evidence. We have taken robust evidence and spoken with hundreds if not thousands of students, employers and teachers over the past year. There was very robust evidence in favour of retaining GCSEs. That does not mean that there are no flaws in the GCSE system, and I believe that the challenge with GCSEs in Wales is to adapt what goes on in relation to GCSEs. For example, England is moving to the English Baccalaureate, which will only involve a small number of subjects. I did not feel that that would be an appropriate direction for young people in Wales. I also believe that it would leave out a very large number of students who would not follow that type of course. Therefore, as a board, we did not feel that we had the options to do things differently. The direction of travel that we felt was important was to adapt and strengthen what is going on at present.

[18] **Aled Roberts:** A fydd yr angen i gyfathrebu yn fwy efallai o achos bod Lloegr yn symud o ran y pynciau craidd tuag at yr EBacc, ac y bydd llawer mwy o bwysau i ddangos bod cadw TGAU yng Nghymru, o ran y proffil rhyngwladol, hwyrach yn anoddach?

Aled Roberts: Will the need to communicate be greater perhaps because England is moving in terms of core subjects towards the EBacc, and there will be more pressure to show that retaining GCSE in Wales, in terms of the international profile, could perhaps be more difficult?

[19] **Mr Evans:** Mae cyfathrebu hyn yn bwysig iawn i'r dyfodol wrth inni symud

Mr Evans: Communicating this is crucially important for the future as we progress. The

ymlaen. Y gair pwysig yw *portability*. Mae'n bwysig i bobl ddeall bod yn rhaid i bobl ifanc Cymru fynd â'u cymwysterau gyda nhw i le bynnag yr ânt a bod pobl yn derbyn y cymwysterau wrth iddynt symud ymlaen.

important word is 'portability'. It is important that people understand that the young people of Wales must be able to take their qualifications with them wherever they go and that people should accept those qualifications as they progress.

[20] **Aled Roberts:** Symudaf at fagloriaeth Cymru. Gwn eich bod yn gefnogol yn yr adroddiad o ran y cymhwyster. Fodd bynnag, mae cryn dipyn o bobl yn ei gefnogi ac eraill yn cwestiynu cryfder y cymhwyster. Pam wnaethoch chi benderfynu argymhell bod bagloriaeth Cymru yn brif gymhwyster cyffredinol o ran y strwythur newydd?

Aled Roberts: I will move on to the Welsh baccalaureate. I know that you are supportive in the report in terms of the qualification. However, there are quite a few people who support it and others who question its strength. Why did you decide to recommend that the Welsh baccalaureate is a main overarching qualification in the new structure?

[21] **Mr Evans:** Eto, roedd y dystiolaeth yn gryf iawn o safbwynt y fagloriaeth. Roedd bron bawb y gwnaethom siarad â nhw yn gefnogol iawn o'r hyn oedd yn mynd ymlaen yn y fagloriaeth. Fel y dywedais wrth ateb y cwestiwn diwethaf, mae gwendidau hefyd, a'r hyn yr ydym yn gobeithio ei wneud, fel rhan o'r ymateb, yw cryfhau'r hyn sy'n digwydd ar hyn o bryd y tu mewn i fagloriaeth Cymru. Yr hyn sy'n bwysig o safbwynt y fagloriaeth yw gwneud yn siŵr bod y fagloriaeth yn cael ei gweld fel *skills driver* i Gymru. Ar ddiwedd y dydd, nid y cymwysterau eu hunain sy'n bwysig ond y sgiliau sy'n dilyn—sgiliau cyfathrebu, er enghraifft, a sgiliau gweithio. Mae bagloriaeth Cymru yn rhoi'r sgiliau hynny i bobl. Fodd bynnag, rhaid cyfathrebu hyn a rhaid i bobl ddeall beth mae'r fagloriaeth yn gallu ei gyflawni.

Mr Evans: Again, the evidence was very strong in terms of the baccalaureate. Virtually all of those we spoke to were very supportive of what happened within the baccalaureate. As with the answer to the last question, there are deficiencies also, and what we are endeavouring to do is strengthen what happens currently within the Welsh baccalaureate. What is important in terms of the baccalaureate is to ensure that it is seen as a skills driver for Wales. At the end of the day, it is not qualifications themselves that are important but the skills that those qualifications nurture—communication skills, for example, and skills in the workplace. The Welsh baccalaureate provides those skills to people. However, we must communicate this and people need to understand what the baccalaureate can achieve.

[22] **Simon Thomas:** Ar gefn cwestiwn Aled, un o'r pethau sy'n nodweddiadol o'r datblygiad yn Lloegr yw'r ymwneud, yn enwedig o ran Safon Uwch, gyda phrifysgolion wrth gynllunio'r arholiadau hynny. Fel y dywedoch ar y dechrau, nid oes gennym y manylion, ond mae'n ymddangos i mi bod perygl bod y cyswllt yna gyda phrifysgolion yn gallu gwneud dau beth: yn gyntaf, oherwydd bod cynifer o bobl yn mynd o Gymru i brifysgolion yn Lloegr, mae'n gallu effeithio ar sut mae pobl yn canfod cymwysterau yng Nghymru ac yn Lloegr, ac yn ail, oherwydd natur y cyfryngau ac ati, bydd pobl yn naturiol yn cymryd yn ganiataol mai'r hyn sy'n digwydd yn Lloegr yw'r norm a bod yr hyn sy'n

Simon Thomas: On the back of Aled's question, one of the things that is a feature of the development in England is the involvement, particularly with regard to A-level, of universities in the design of those exams. As you said at the beginning, we do not have the details, but it appears to me that there is a danger that the connection with universities could lead to two outcomes: first, because so many people from Wales go to English universities, it could affect how people perceive qualifications in Wales and in England, and, secondly, because of the nature of the media and so on, people will naturally take for granted that what happens in England is the norm and what happens in Wales is a divergence from the norm.

digwydd yng Nghymru yn gwyro oddi wrth y norm. Fodd bynnag, fel y dywedwch, Lloegr sy'n gwyro oddi wrth batrwm y tair gwlad mewn gwirionedd. Wrth ddatblygu system yng Nghymru, sut allwn ni wneud yn siŵr nid yn unig bod y trosglwyddo'n saff, ond bod hygredded i'r cymhwyster hwn, yn enwedig o ran yr ymwneud â phrifysgolion?

However, as you say, England is in fact diverging from the pattern set by the other three countries. In developing a system in Wales, how can we ensure that not only is the portability safeguarded, but that the qualification has credibility, especially in relation to university involvement?

[23] **Mr Evans:** Fel rhan o'r gwaith ymchwil rydym wedi'i wneud hyd yn hyn, rydym wedi bod yn trafod y materion hyn gyda phrifysgolion yn Lloegr, ac rydym wedi cwrdd â nifer ohonynt. Ar y funud, nid wyf yn teimlo bod hyn yn broblem fawr i Gymru, ond yr hyn sy'n bwysig yw'r ffordd a'r dull rydym yn ymateb i'r wasg yn Lloegr. Fel y dywedoch, mae'r wasg yn Lloegr yn cael effaith fawr ar bobl yng Nghymru hefyd. Mae'n bwysig bod pobl yn deall yr hyn rydym yn ei wneud yng Nghymru ac yn deall y system rydym yn ceisio ei datblygu, a bod y system honno yn unigryw, yn gryf ac yn drylwyr.

Mr Evans: As part of the research work that we have carried out to date, we have been discussing these issues with universities in England, and we have met with a number of them. At the moment, I do not feel that this is a major problem for Wales, but what is important is the way in which we respond to the press and media in England. As you say, the press and media in England have a great impact on people in Wales as well. It is important that people understand what we are doing in Wales and understand the system that we are endeavouring to develop, and that that system is unique as well as robust and thorough.

9.30 a.m.

[24] **Angela Burns:** Good morning. I know that you and I have already discussed this to some extent, but I wanted to highlight one thing and then ask you a specific question. First, in my role, a lot of people come to talk to me about the Welsh baccalaureate and the view is that they would like to see it being developed and enhanced because they do not feel that it is doing what it should at the moment. Your report states that people are overwhelmingly positive about the Welsh baccalaureate, but the comments from people who come to talk to me—admittedly, they are people with issues—do not reflect that at all. There is confusion and concern about how, going forward, you might fit your eight or nine A-levels into a study programme with Welsh baccalaureate and so on. However, the issue that I want to address directly is the employer's view. When you took your evidence, what was the employer's view of it? Again, much of the feedback that I have had is that employers are confused about what the Welsh baccalaureate does and what it adds to the overall qualifications programme.

[25] **Mr Evans:** Some of the employers' initial responses were related to confusion—they did not fully understand the qualification. So, we have to accept that. However, some were also very positive. When the employers understood what the baccalaureate was about, what the study programme consisted of and what it will consist of, they were overwhelmingly in support of it. That is what I meant by the skills driver response. At the end of the day, if you talk to employers, what are they concerned about? They are concerned about whether a young employee has good writing skills, good numerical skills, can work within a group environment, can relate to colleagues effectively in the workplace and has an understanding of the world of work and an understanding of enterprise. Those are the skills that employers are really concerned about. They are not concerned so much about the level of achievement in history or geography or whatever else. So, the baccalaureate provides that wraparound opportunity, as part of a young person's main course of study, to enable these skills to be developed. It was because employers felt so concerned about the skills levels of young people coming forward that we took the decision to push on the baccalaureate because we felt that it was about not just the qualification, but those other attributes that young people needed. In the

changing world that you are all very familiar with, those skills are paramount as we move forward. That is why we decided to recommend that the system in Wales was based on the baccalaureate model.

[26] **Angela Burns:** I have heard what you said clearly and I support pretty much all of it, but when you say that employers are not as interested in the level of achievement in a particular subject at GCSE, how does that reflect on how we encourage and develop our more able and talented students because we may be saying to them that it does not matter how brainy they are—

[27] **Mr Evans:** No, not all. My response on that was the fact that, overwhelmingly, employers told us about skills deficiencies and the fact that young people coming to them, even with a range of GCSEs, were lacking in some of those basic skills.

[28] We felt that we could not ignore that and that we had to address it. It says nothing about the fact that young people need to maximise their ability and capability in all subjects at the end of the day, be those science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and languages or English. I am not trying to underplay any of those subjects. All I am saying is that those subjects, and how we address them, need to be studied alongside developing the skills platform that is required. We believe that the baccalaureate provides us with the model to develop a skills platform while continuing with that underpinning qualification base, using tried and tested qualifications such as GCSEs and A-levels.

[29] **Julie Morgan:** I am very supportive of what you are saying, but a number of constituents have come to me to ask about the views of English universities. Could you expand on that? You said that you had visited some of the universities; could you tell us more about that?

[30] **Mr Evans:** We visited a variety of universities in Wales and England and we had representatives of universities visit us. We have had a frank and open exchange with those universities, and that is included in the online part of the evidence. I do not think that the universities' views are shared by the majority of parents. Parents are concerned about portability and carrying qualifications, and we have to respect that view. However, universities are open about it, and they say that they are not particularly worried about whether there is a totally different system in Wales. They deal with students coming from over 50 countries, and they have to unpick their students' qualifications base, whether they are from Singapore, China, India or Scotland. Having a different qualifications system in Wales was not something that they were very concerned about. What they were concerned about was that, whatever we do in Wales, we develop a system that is rigorous, that has standards built into it and that it is world-class in terms of its ambition.

[31] **Julie Morgan:** So, some of the communication needs to be with the parents?

[32] **Mr Evans:** Very much so. We have to work with teachers as well and make sure that we bring about this change and start to emphasise the skills dimension. I am talking about softer skills, because when you talk about skills, people often think about harder skills, but I am talking about the softer skills that enable people to succeed in life and about making sure that those skills are recognised as being important.

[33] **Jocelyn Davies:** So, have those people who have been on the radio saying that we will have an inferior system in Wales been talking a load of rubbish?

[34] **Mr Evans:** Yes, absolutely. I have not heard too many people saying that we will have an inferior system in Wales.

[35] **Jocelyn Davies:** You do not need many people to give that impression.

[36] **Mr Evans:** People sometimes come out with one-off statements of that nature. I would like to turn that statement on its head and, through what we are proposing and planning, create one of the best systems. That is why I am deliberately using the term ‘world-class’. That is not a term that the committee was using because it is a fashionable term. We can give you a definition of world-class, and we would like to see what we are developing within Wales falling into that particular category.

[37] **Jocelyn Davies:** I think that we have to appreciate the parents’ position, which is that they think that their child is going to have one chance at this. An error at that point could be disastrous for the child, so I can appreciate that parents might be concerned. We all have to be careful about what we say in relation to this.

[38] **Mr Evans:** We have to be balanced and we have to make sure that we talk effectively to all constituency groups—not just parents, but the teaching community and the employer community as well. They all have a slightly mixed or differing view in terms of what is going on. Communication is not something that we have done effectively.

[39] **Angela Burns:** I wanted to talk about your recommendation 6 in regard to Welsh-medium qualifications. You state:

[40] ‘The Welsh Government should ensure clear pathways for progression through the medium of Welsh. GCSEs and A levels should continue to be available, as they are now, in English and Welsh, at the same cost to providers. By 2015, they should be available in English and Welsh simultaneously.’

[41] You state the same in relation to vocational courses. How realistic is that, given this two-year time frame, and what will be the impact of this in terms of cost? What barriers do you think we will have to try to overcome to achieve that?

[42] **Mr Evans:** The fact that there needs to be equal access to qualifications through the media of Welsh and English is an important tenet of the report. As a bilingual country, we feel that that is a starting point. To answer your question, 2015 is realistic in the context of general qualifications. The majority of the important general qualifications at GCSE and A-level are available in both languages. Where they are not, we can make sure that they are by 2015.

[43] The challenges are in the context of vocational qualifications because, frequently, the vocational qualifications are driven by awarding bodies in England and beyond. So, there, we need slightly more time to make sure that the qualifications are available in two languages. However, one of the roles that we envisage for Qualifications Wales as part of its gatekeeping function is to make sure that, when a body applies to offer a qualification in Wales, to get that stamp of approval, if you like, it has to be able to say, ‘Yes, we will make the qualification available in English and Welsh if it is being delivered in Wales’. So, we will throw the onus back on the awarding body if it decides to use Wales as a marketplace.

[44] **Angela Burns:** So, would you also agree that another barrier to this happening by 2015 is the ability to recruit the people who can deliver the said qualification training through the medium of Welsh in time?

[45] **Mr Evans:** That is very much what we said in the report. The issue, we felt, is not a qualifications issue; it is a supply issue. The fact that we do not currently have the range, particularly of vocational tutors—although it is improving, and colleges and schools across the country are doing some very good work in this particular sort of regard—means that there

is an opportunity to collaborate to maximise the pool of resources that is available to us. However, it is a supply issue at the end of the day. That, I think, is where our energies also need to go.

[46] **Angela Burns:** I have just one further quick question. What do you think that we need to include in the new GCSE Welsh as a first language to ensure that it improves literacy levels? There has been an awful lot of mood music on that subject in the last couple of months.

[47] **Mr Evans:** I am sorry; which GCSE?

[48] **Angela Burns:** Welsh as a first language.

[49] **Mr Evans:** The Welsh as a first language GCSE already has a very high component of written skills demanded within it. I believe that if you break it down—and perhaps Kate could help me here—it is currently around 40% of the qualification, compared with 15% in terms of GCSE English language. So, Welsh language is not an issue at this point in time in terms of the standard that is expected. The problem is currently more with the English language in terms of the skills of writing, spelling et cetera. Already, certain initiatives have been introduced to strengthen GCSE English language, and that will clearly continue as part of our recommendations.

[50] **Angela Burns:** Just as a matter of interest, do you think that that lack of capability within GCSE English language is as a result of it being, in many cases, a combined subject now rather than a divided subject?

[51] **Ms Crabtree:** It is not combined in Wales; we still separate English language and literature. However, for whatever reason over the years, the amount and proportion of spelling, punctuation and grammar has dropped off and certainly needs addressing.

[52] **Angela Burns:** I was under the impression that it was possible just to choose the English language component.

[53] **Mr Evans:** Yes, I think that you can. You can drop the literature component.

[54] **Angela Burns:** So, you can drop the literature. In effect, that takes away your ability to develop, perhaps, your reading and writing skills.

[55] **Mr Evans:** In our report, we are saying that there needs to be far more emphasis on the English language part of it; and the written part of that English language examination needs to be strengthened.

[56] **Angela Burns:** Thank you.

[57] **Christine Chapman:** Did you wish to come in on that, Kate?

[58] **Ms Crabtree:** No.

[59] **Christine Chapman:** Jenny wants to come in on this.

[60] **Jenny Rathbone:** I just wanted to go back to recommendation 6 and challenge you on the practicalities of this. There is great aspiration that everything will be delivered bilingually, but I can recall evidence from when we had a look at the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 of the difficulties of obtaining people who were qualified to teach bricklaying or woodwork bilingually. Ergo, it would not be possible to teach those subjects in

both languages. If an awarding body is not given the stamp of approval unless it can demonstrate that it is able to deliver it bilingually, are we not artificially limiting the opportunities for students, particularly in more rural areas, in the economy? That is one thing.

9.45 a.m.

[61] Secondly, even in the core subjects of mathematics and science, we have considerable difficulty, certainly at the school where I am a governor, in getting good mathematics teachers or specific science subject specialists. Therefore, getting them also to be bilingual is, once again, raising the bar in terms of what schools have to do. So, this 2015 deadline is worrying me too.

[62] **Mr Evans:** It is clearly aspirational, and it will have some challenges associated with it. However, we maintain that the core subjects in the general qualifications—the GCSEs and the A-levels—will all be delivered and available in two languages in 2015. As I said before, the challenge is in relation to vocational qualifications. Initiatives have been introduced over the last few years that are moving that agenda rapidly at this point in time. Our intention is not to marginalise anybody. I am not trying to belittle the difficulty; there will be a challenge. I would hope that, in this particular area, we can develop a set of recommendations over the coming four or five years that will address any deficiency that we have. For the vocational qualifications, 2017 is probably more realistic; the 2015 target is very much to do with general qualifications.

[63] **Jenny Rathbone:** That still leaves us with the problems that we have in recruiting good mathematics teachers in any language.

[64] **Ms Crabtree:** The remit of Huw's board was to look at the availability of the qualifications—

[65] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is fair enough.

[66] **Ms Crabtree:** We cannot influence the delivery network as quickly. However, while that was not part of the remit, the qualifications will be available if providers want to offer them through the medium of Welsh.

[67] **Mr Evans:** However, we were certainly aware of the problem.

[68] **Jenny Rathbone:** To move on, one of the biggest problems with the UK economy is the fact that we have always regarded vocational skills and qualifications as inferior to academic skills. So, I am pleased to see the strong recommendations in your report about giving equal weight to vocational skills and qualifications. I wonder whether you can tell us how you think that these recommendations will help to achieve that parity of recognition.

[69] **Mr Evans:** Parity of esteem has escaped all of us. We visited other countries where the same challenge exists, because everybody aspires to do academic qualifications, because they are perceived as the gateway for moving forward. Academic qualifications are not a panacea for everybody, and that is why it is important to have an effective range of vocational qualifications available. We are trying, through the recommendations, to create parity.

[70] First, unlike England, we are ensuring that vocational qualifications are available in the 14 to 16 phase. There will be a capping of 40%, because we think that it is important that, until the age of 16, young people get a broad and balanced qualification. We are saying that vocational qualifications are important, but they need to be robust and rigorously assessed in that particular category.

[71] Post 16, we are saying that vocational qualifications need to be seen much more in a European context, and that is why we propose to introduce the concepts of IVET and CVET—initial vocational education and training and continuing vocational education and training—to give us that kind of progression and coherence in terms of progression post 16. In terms of the development of the baccalaureate, we are also saying that, regardless of which pathway you are on—you could be on an academic pathway, doing three A-levels in mathematics, physics and chemistry or you could be on a vocational pathway with a level 3 vocational course—because of the core disciplines that you are studying you will end up with one advanced diploma.

[72] **Jenny Rathbone:** What evidence did you gather that the top universities—which can choose, and which maybe have 100 applicants for each place—will give equal weight to people with those vocational qualifications as opposed to academic ones?

[73] **Mr Evans:** We did not ask the specific question as you have asked it now, but in our discussions with the university sector, its issue was very much to do with the grading of the baccalaureate, and introducing a grading system at level 3. We believe that we can achieve this parity by introducing the grading at level 3 because, currently, the academic route is seen as being externally examined et cetera, whereas the vocational route is seen as being internally assessed, not externally examined. If we kind of standardise what is going on here, to a certain degree, then we hope to achieve an equal outcome at the end of the day.

[74] **Jenny Rathbone:** At what point do you think we might achieve the sort of situation they have in Germany, where technical qualifications are given much greater esteem?

[75] **Mr Evans:** We are moving in that direction, and I think that it is happening. I hope that the work of this review, assuming that the recommendations are accepted, will move us in that direction. Outside our remit was the apprenticeship framework in Wales, and there is a huge amount of work to be done in terms of making sure that it dovetails neatly into what we are proposing in terms of post-16 progression. That apprenticeship framework, if handled properly, could be the basis to develop a system in Wales that could be the envy of the rest of the world.

[76] **Christine Chapman:** Jenny talked about Germany in particular. Is it not the case that there is still a greater depth, and even an academic aspect, to vocational subjects in places like Germany? I might be wrong, but I read the other day that philosophy, for example, is part of other European countries' vocational qualifications. So, it is the depth of knowledge as well, and not just what we would regard as purely practical skills. It is deeper than that, and more academic.

[77] **Mr Evans:** We did some desk work and desk research on Germany, but we did not visit Germany. Yes, it has a history of very effective technical education, and that is there because of the involvement of the employer. The employer works very closely with the qualifications system. There are some good examples here in Wales of the employer coming in and working very closely with the qualifications system and with training providers. However, Germany does this very well indeed and, because of that, it has developed a relevance in its training and in terms of developing the aspirations of young people. Increasingly, the days of hundreds of thousands of people blindly following a degree course may be coming to an end, and I think that we are on the verge of finding the beginning of an alternative system. Clearly, degree provision will be important as we move forward, but there will be alternative routes, and the apprenticeship route will be an important one, and an important alternative. That is why it is so important that we get our post-16 vocational training streams right.

[78] **Christine Chapman:** Aled Roberts will come in now. I just remind Members that we

need to finish around 10.15 a.m. and there are quite a lot of questions that Members need to ask.

[79] **Aled Roberts:** As someone who blindly followed a degree course—

[80] **Mr Evans:** Like many people.

[81] **Aled Roberts:** Is it not the case that one of the difficulties of comparing our situation, whether at a Wales or a UK level, with Germany's is the fact that the economies are very different? There is technical university provision in Germany that is feeding, in effect, a much larger manufacturing sector. That was my experience when we had a twinned authority. So, we are not comparing like with like, which is quite a dangerous thing to do.

[82] **Mr Evans:** It is difficult for us to compare the Welsh economy to the German economy, but at the same time, what we have here, I believe, is an economy in transition. We have not quite made the transition from the kind of economy that was established in this country 20, 30 or 40 years ago, when everybody was clear about what it involved and what skills it demanded. Today, in Wales, we have a smaller, far more diverse economy, and that is why, in preparing our young people for that economy, we have to focus on the skills that will be required by the kind of economy that we have. That is where I think the review group focused its attention: on developing the kind of skill set required by the economy now and, possibly, in the future in Wales.

[83] **Angela Burns:** I have one final question to ask on qualifications—I know that we have discussed them a lot. Your review identified that we probably have too many qualifications. It is something that we all know; we have all seen it and it has been raised in various committees. I think that there are something like 10,500 at present.

[84] **Mr Evans:** It is coming down.

[85] **Angela Burns:** It is coming down slowly, slowly. You quite rightly spoke about getting a broad balance up to 16, and then, post-16, you want to add more opportunities.

[86] **Mr Evans:** We want more coherence.

[87] **Angela Burns:** Yes, and you want the European context brought in, which means that we are going to add some. So, how do you think your review will be able to strip out those that are no longer appropriate? As a committee, we did quite a big study earlier in the academic year, looking at the difficulty of delivering a choice of 14-19 pathways. You and I have discussed 14-19 pathways before. We have this whole choice agenda about letting anybody choose to do anything within their environment, and yet we have this plethora of qualifications, and perhaps not the right ones. How will you be able to change that?

[88] **Mr Evans:** Choice is important, and it is important for young people, but it is not unlimited choice and it should not be choice at any cost. It has to be properly planned choice. That is the first point to make.

[89] Of the 7,500 qualifications that I think we currently have, some of them, although they are very small qualifications, will have to continue. It may be one that provides the skill base for a slate worker, for example, to work with slate. There may be only 10 people in Wales who are trained in that area, so we have to ensure that those sorts of skills are continued. We cannot just say that we will have 50 qualifications, because there are very specific employer demands.

[90] How we bring the number down from 7,500 is that we are basically creating national

criteria that qualifications have to adhere to, and I think that the national criteria are listed in the recommendations—certainly some of them are listed there. Awarding organisations will have to comply with the national criteria. We are also asking sector skills councils and employer bodies to undertake work for us to ensure that they decide for their own industry, be it engineering, construction or whatever, what the most important, relevant and valued qualifications are in their fields. We have also proposed in the report setting up an advisory body made up of employers that will also have a view on this.

[91] So, between all those linked activities, we hope to have, at the end of the day, a far more meaningful and practical landscape that a young person, or an older person for that matter, can navigate through to find their direction and their progression, as well as a system that an employer can understand. That is our aim, and we have put in the recommendations some of the ways in which we hope to achieve that.

[92] **Rebecca Evans:** I want to move on to a different area and ask how you think your recommendations will help to create a system that supports disengaged young people and helps to prevent young people from disengaging from learning.

10.00 a.m.

[93] **Mr Evans:** One of the major focus areas in the report has very much to do with literacy and numeracy. We felt that we had to be quite strong and robust in our response in that particular area. Clearly, the figures for literacy and numeracy have not been moving and have not been moving fast enough within Wales.

[94] Some of the initiatives that we are proposing here via the focus that we are now giving to the revised GCSEs in English and numeracy will, we hope, address that as part of the baccalaureate. You should also remember that the baccalaureate at a national level can be achieved at the foundation level as well. So, young people who are not quite up to the national level will achieve a foundation baccalaureate, which will involve a significant element of core skills. At the heart of disengagement is the fact that young people cannot communicate, cannot write properly and cannot work effectively within a group situation. We hope that the type of education that we can put in here will help their progress as they move through the system.

[95] For those who are not in that category, we believe that education needs to be personalised. We believe that we need to have personalised packages of education that are tailor made to enable every young person, as they come through the school system, to not become NEET—not in education, employment or training—and to not drop out of the system, et cetera. At the same time, we should not put them to one side and say, ‘You’re doing an entry level package of learning’; when they are ready, they can come back into the mainstream and start progressing through the system. What we are proposing here, via the unique system for Wales, is a system that is inclusive and enables people to progress through the various layers, or they can leave at 16 if they want to. However, if they want to continue, they can move through the system in an effective way.

[96] So, I hope that we have at least addressed it. We commissioned some very specific work to look at this whole NEETs area, and that is our response within the report.

[97] **Rebecca Evans:** You mentioned literacy and numeracy, but the third priority for the Welsh Government is breaking that link between poverty and attainment. How do you think that your recommendations can help to move towards that?

[98] **Mr Evans:** I would hope that, because we are keeping more people in the learning system, enabling more people to reach their potential and utilising an effective mix of

vocational and academic qualification, more and more people will progress into employment and higher education. Education alone cannot do it; this is a partnership between the economy and education, and you need to get both parts of the equation—as I am sure that you realise—working very effectively together.

[99] **Jocelyn Davies:** Do you think that there have been inadequacies in the current qualifications system that have added to the high rate of illiteracy and innumeracy?

[100] **Mr Evans:** I am not suggesting that there has been inadequacy within the current system. I think that there has been a lack of focus on core skills and skills that are important. There may have been a chasing of targets that has contributed to the problem, but we hope that we will achieve a refocus from this review to make sure that the basics that we have talked about this morning are addressed fully by the time a young person reaches the age of 16. Even after the age of 16, there should be an opportunity to continue, and that is built in.

[101] **Julie Morgan:** I know that particular groups have underachieved historically. Did you look at any evidence from black boys or black young men, for example, or any other group that has a tradition of underachieving?

[102] **Mr Evans:** Yes. We commissioned some work here to look at various areas of underachievement. We also looked at the contribution of students with learning difficulties, and we looked at the way in which they could be brought into the learning system. Our proposals in the report relating to entry qualifications are very much about making sure that everyone is embraced within this distinctive system for Wales and that everyone has an opportunity to progress.

[103] **Julie Morgan:** What about girls and boys? Those are areas where there have been glaring problems in the system, particularly in terms of qualifications.

[104] **Mr Evans:** The issue is to do with the achievement of boys, actually, is it not?

[105] **Julie Morgan:** Well, I know that you were not looking at apprenticeships, but, looking at apprenticeships, boys take all the ones that lead to high earnings and the girls end up in lower-earning jobs.

[106] **Mr Evans:** To answer your question specifically, apprenticeships were beyond our remit, so we did not specifically look—

[107] **Julie Morgan:** I know that, but is not that reflected in some of—

[108] **Mr Evans:** Yes, it is.

[109] **Julie Morgan:** Did you look at that?

[110] **Mr Evans:** Yes, we did.

[111] **Julie Morgan:** Right. So what are you proposing to do about that gender gap?

[112] **Mr Evans:** If I remember correctly, I think we discussed gender in our committee, but I cannot remember any specific recommendations that we came up with with regard to gender.

[113] **Ms Crabtree:** It was more to do with the assessment methodology and whether linear or modular approaches better suit boys or girls. There is some anecdotal evidence that boys are better suited to a linear approach, whereas girls prefer the coursework and are advantaged

by that assessment methodology. The desk-based research that was undertaken showed that the gap was not very great. However, that was the specific focus of the gender study that we did.

[114] **Mr Evans:** My recollection is that the evidence coming to us did not present us with a serious problem, so we did not highlight it within the report.

[115] **Simon Thomas:** Rwyf am droi at yr unig argymhelliad yn eich adroddiad sydd wedi cael ei weithredu hyd yn hyn gan y Llywodraeth, sef i sefydlu Cymwysterau Cymru. Rydych wedi eich penodi i fod yn gyfrifol am y tasglu i sefydlu'r corff hwnnw. Pam y dewisiwyd 2015 fel y flwyddyn i sefydlu'r corff? O edrych ar eich adroddiad, yr unig dro yr ydych yn sôn am 2015 yw yng nghyd-destun y cymwysterau newydd, ac nid y corff newydd. Mae bagloriaeth yn cael ei sefydlu yn Lloegr, felly mae'n rhaid bod gennym rhywbeth amgen yng Nghymru. Pam fod 2015 mor bwysig i sefydlu'r corff newydd?

Simon Thomas: I turn to the only recommendation in your report that has been implemented so far by the Government, which is to establish Qualifications Wales. You have been appointed to be responsible for the taskforce to establish that body. Why was 2015 chosen as the year for the establishment of the body? Looking at your report, the only time that you mention 2015 is in the context of the new qualifications, not the new body. A baccalaureate is being established in England, so we need to have an alternative in Wales. Why is 2015 so important for the establishment of the new body?

[116] **Mr Evans:** Yr amserlen yr ydym wedi edrych arni ar gyfer mwyafrif yr argymhellion yw 2017. Byddwn yn dechrau yn 2015, a 2017 fydd y targed ar gyfer y gweddill. Mae'n rhaid inni ddechrau yn rhywle gyda Cymwysterau Cymru ac mae'n bwysig, o safbwynt rheoleiddio a rôl rheoleiddio, bod rhywbeth yn cael ei sefydlu erbyn 2015. Ar ôl hynny, bydd yn rhaid inni ddechrau symud ar feysydd achredu a dyfarnu.

Mr Evans: The timetable that we have been looking at for the majority of our recommendations is 2017. We will commence in 2015, but 2017 will be the target for the rest. We have to start somewhere with Qualifications Wales and it is important, from the point of view of regulation and the regulatory role, that something is in place by 2015. After that, we will have to begin to move on accreditation and awarding.

[117] **Simon Thomas:** Yng nghyd-destun eich ateb gynnau ynglŷn â rôl bwysig CBAC yn y corff newydd, nid wyf wedi gweld unrhyw ddatganiad cyhoeddus gan CBAC ynglŷn â Chymwysterau Cymru, rôl CBAC, neu hyd yn oed ei agwedd at Cymwysterau Cymru. Mae awgrym yn eich ateb eich bod yn gweld dau gam i'r broses hon, sef eich bod yn gyntaf, ar gefn rhai o'r problemau a gafwyd yn yr haf gyda TGAU Saesneg efallai, yn ymdrin â rheoleiddio, ac wedyn yn ymdrin â'r elfen fwy CBAC-aidd o'r broses. A yw hynny'n deg?

Simon Thomas: In the context of your earlier answer about the important role of WJEC in this new body, I have not seen any public statement by WJEC about Qualifications Wales, WJEC's role, or even its attitude towards Qualifications Wales. There is a suggestion in your response that you see this as a two-stage process, namely that first, on the back of some of the problems over the summer with GCSE English perhaps, you will deal with the regulatory aspects, and then address the more WJEC-like aspects of the process. Is that fair?

[118] **Mr Evans:** Nid wyf yn siŵr a yw hynny'n deg ai peidio, a bod yn onest. Fel hynny rydw i'n gweld pethau, beth bynnag, fel y person sy'n gorfod edrych ar hyn. Nid oes cymaint â hynny o amser rhwng nawr a

Mr Evans: I am not sure whether that is fair or not, to be honest. That is how I see things, as the individual charged with looking at this. There is not that much time between now and 2015. We have to establish a national body

2015. Mae'n rhaid sefydlu corff cenedlaethol yma. Mae'n rhaid gwneud hynny yn ofalus ac mae'n rhaid inni gymryd nifer o bobl gyda ni ar y siwrnai. Hyd yn hyn, nid wyf wedi penderfynu ar yr amserlen yn fanwl, a bod yn onest. Dechrau ar y broses ydym ni.

[119] **Simon Thomas:** A sôn am fynd â phobl gyda chi, beth ydych yn disgwyl ei glywed gan CBAC yn ystod yr wythnosau nesaf?

[120] **Mr Evans:** Rydym yn cwrdd â CBAC ymhen rhyw bythefnos. Byddwn yn cynnal seminar gyda'n gilydd i ddechrau trafod yr her o greu y corff newydd hwn. Rydym reit ar ddechrau'r daith. Ni allaf ddweud ble byddwn yn bennu i fyny. Rydym reit ar ddechrau'r daith ac rydym yn dechrau rhywbeth a fydd yn bwysig o safbwynt bywyd cymdeithasol a chyhoeddus Cymru.

[121] **Simon Thomas:** A ydych wedi cael unrhyw addewid gan y Llywodraeth ynglŷn â sut bydd y corff newydd hwn yn cael ei gyllido? A ydych wedi cael unrhyw drafodaethau, hyd yn hyn, am gostau sefydlu, er enghraifft?

[122] **Mr Evans:** Hyd yn hyn, yr unig beth rwyf wedi ei glywed yw'r datganiad gan y Gweinidog. Nid ydym wedi dechrau trafod y cyllid a'r hyn sydd ei angen i sefydlu'r corff newydd hwn. Wrth gwrs, bydd angen edrych ar hynny yn fanwl dros yr wythnosau nesaf.

[123] **Simon Thomas:** Bydd costau sefydlu o leiaf gyda chorff newydd yn 2015.

[124] **Mr Evans:** Bydd costau sefydlu ar gyfer y corff, rwy'n siŵr, ond rwy'n gobeithio bod yr adnoddau yn y system yn barod. Ar ôl rhedeg coleg am dros 20 mlynedd, rwy'n ddigon cyfarwydd â defnyddio adnoddau i dynnu pethau at ei gilydd yn gyflym.

[125] **Simon Thomas:** Y peth olaf, ar hyn o bryd, gyda'r corff newydd hwn, yn yr adroddiad, rydych chi, fel y Gweinidog ddoe, wedi gwneud yn fawr o batrwm yr Alban, ac rydych wedi dweud heddiw eich bod yn ystyried y patrwm hwnnw gyda'r gorau yn y byd a'i fod yn meddu ar y rhinweddau sy'n dod gyda hynny. Sut ydych yn gweld y

here. We have to do that carefully and we have to take many people with us on that journey. So far, I have not yet decided on the detailed timetable, to be honest. We are at the start of the process.

Simon Thomas: Talking about taking people with you, what do you expect to hear from WJEC within the next few weeks?

Mr Evans: We will be meeting WJEC in about a fortnight's time. We will be having a seminar together to start to discuss the challenges of creating this new body. We are right at the start of the journey. I cannot tell you where we will end up. We are right at the start of the journey and we are starting something that will be important in terms of the social and public life of Wales.

Simon Thomas: Have you had any pledges from the Government about how this new body will be funded? Have you had any discussions, to date, about the establishment costs, for example?

Mr Evans: To date, all that I have heard is the Minister's statement. We have not started to discuss funding and what will be required to establish this new body. Of course, we will need to look at that in detail over the next few weeks.

Simon Thomas: There will at least be establishment costs for a new body in 2015.

Mr Evans: There will be establishment costs, I am sure, but I hope that the resources are already in the system. Having run a college for over 20 years, I am quite familiar with using resources to bring things together quite quickly.

Simon Thomas: Finally, for the moment, on this new body, in your report you, like the Minister yesterday, spoke highly of the Scottish model, and you have said today that you consider it to be a world-class model and that it has all the requisite virtues. In what way do you envisage that the different interests in this new body can be kept

cedwir y buddiannau gwahanol yn y corff hwn ar wahân? Nid oes neb wedi awgrymu rhywbeth gwell i mi. Serch hynny, rwy'n gweld bod peryglon gyda chael achredu, arholi a rheoleiddio i gyd mewn un pecyn. Roedd peryglon gyda hynny yn y Llywodraeth a bydd peryglon o ran hynny yn awr gyda'r corff newydd. A ydych wedi dysgu unrhyw beth penodol o'r Alban neu unrhyw le arall sydd yn rhoi hyder i chi y gallwch greu'r corff newydd hwn a chadw waliau rhwng y buddiannau gwahanol?

[126] **Mr Evans:** Ni allaf ateb yn fanwl. Hyd yn hyn, rydym yn gwybod bod yn rhaid inni greu strwythur i'r sefydliad newydd a fydd yn gwahaniaethu rhwng dau ran y corff newydd. Bydd yn rhaid inni gael pwyllgorau sy'n gweithio ac yn ymateb mewn ffordd wahanol, ac mae'r patrwm hwnnw yn yr Alban yn barod.

[127] **Simon Thomas:** A oes gennych unrhyw farn ynglŷn â natur statudol y corff newydd hwn a pha fath o gorff a fydd?

[128] **Mr Evans:** Dim ar y funud. Mae'n rhaid inni gael cyngor ar hynny.

[129] **Julie Morgan:** You say in your report that high-quality, impartial and reliable information and guidance about qualifications should be available. What is the best way of ensuring that it is impartial?

[130] **Mr Evans:** Careers Wales has an important role to play here and it very much needs to be a part of the partnership in taking this forward. We would look to it to help us with that process, but also to the teaching and learning community. It is important that this whole notion of developing a learning system, and developing a learning system for an area, is taken seriously so that there is impartial advice. So, it is a combination of the role of Careers Wales and of the people who are delivering on the ground in a local area.

[131] **Ms Crabtree:** If I may add to that, we will expect the designers of qualifications, the awarding organisations, to be clearer about the purpose of qualifications. In the report, we use the terms IVET and CVET to clarify to the learners the purpose of those qualifications. Is it a competence-based qualification? Will it progress them to higher education? That sort of information needs to be better supplied so that learners can access it and make informed choices in the future.

[132] **Julie Morgan:** Swiftly, because I know that we are nearly at the end of the meeting, what are the main challenges in order to improve the performance management data relating to qualifications?

[133] **Mr Evans:** We need information on destinations. We need to find out where people are going and where they end up. That is a huge challenge for us. In the long term, we also need to review the way that we report on performance and on institutional performance. That reporting system needs to be standardised. So, when you are reporting on a post-16 education

separate? Nobody has suggested anything better to me. Despite that, I see that there are dangers in having accreditation, examining and regulation all in one package. There were dangers with that in Government and there will be dangers in that regard now with the new body. Have you learned anything specific from Scotland or anywhere else that gives you confidence that you can establish this new body and retain those walls between the different interests?

Mr Evans: I cannot answer that in detail, but, so far, we know that we must create a structure for the new organisation that will differentiate between the two functions. We must have committees that work and respond in different ways, and that pattern already exists in Scotland.

Simon Thomas: Do you have any view on the statutory nature of this body and what sort of body it will be?

Mr Evans: Not at present. We must seek advice on that.

system, it does not matter whether it is a school, a college or a training provider, everybody is reported on in the same way.

10.15 a.m.

[134] We recommend in the report that the main performance indicators will be the achievement or the attainment of the baccalaureate at a national and at an advanced level. We say that because it is a stretching demand in terms of the individual. At the national level it will be five GCSEs at grades A to C, plus the core elements of the baccalaureate. The main challenge there is to work with Estyn, which, I am sure, will collaborate and work very effectively with us, but also to work with the teachers and to make sure that we have a supported delivery programme in terms of incrementally developing the teaching and learning process to bring in the kinds of skills that are required to support the system that we are trying to develop within Wales.

[135] **Christine Chapman:** Thank you. We will now have to close this session. First, I wish to thank Huw and Kate for attending this morning. It has been an excellent session, and I thank you, once again, for the report. I am sure that we will be returning to this quite frequently. We will send you a transcript of the meeting so that you can check it for factual accuracy. Again, thank you both for attending.

[136] Before I close this morning's meeting, I advise Members that the next meeting will take place next Thursday, 17 January, when we will begin to take evidence for our inquiry into attendance and behaviour. Thank you.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 10.16 a.m.
The meeting ended at 10.16 a.m.*