

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i'r [Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg](#) ar [Bil y Gymraeg ac Addysg \(Cymru\)](#)

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) on the [Welsh Language and Education \(Wales\) Bill](#)

WLE 15

Ymateb gan: Ffederasiwn Hyfforddiant Cenedlaethol Cymru

Response from: National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW)

As key stakeholders in the skills development and vocational education landscape in Wales, we at NTfW, welcome the opportunity to respond to the proposed bill aimed at promoting the Welsh language. We fully recognise the importance of achieving the target of one million Welsh speakers by 2050 and the broader role the Welsh language plays in shaping the cultural and professional identity of the nation.

In particular, the bill's provisions that relate to the statutory basis for Welsh language education, language standards, and the classification of Welsh language users have direct implications for our work. We are committed to aligning our apprenticeship programs with the Welsh Government's goals, but we also believe the following considerations are crucial to ensuring the successful integration of Welsh language requirements into the apprenticeship system:

Integration of Welsh Language in Apprenticeship Programs

Welsh Language Learning Opportunities: The bill should explicitly address how Welsh language learning will be integrated into apprenticeship programs. Apprenticeships are already tightly structured to provide vocational skills, and adding Welsh language training must be carefully managed to ensure it does not disrupt the core vocational learning outcomes. Incidental Welsh is used in the provider setting and with staff as well as learners undertaking a Welsh language and Culture unit within their induction. This will need to be considered with the support of Medr as the strategic driver for Post 16 education in Wales as they develop their strategic plan and policies.

Tailored Language Support: It will be important to provide tailored Welsh language training that corresponds to the needs and proficiency levels of apprentices, especially for apprentices in sectors where bilingualism may be essential i.e., Health and Social Care.

Impact on Apprenticeship Providers and Employers

Resources for Training Providers: The bill should make provisions for additional resources, both financial and educational, for apprenticeship providers to implement Welsh language training effectively. This could include funding for bilingual training materials, Welsh language assessors, and support staff. Providers have received consistent support from colleagues at Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. Our ask would be that this support continues to help strengthen the use of the Welsh language in the Post 16 sectors.

Employer Readiness: Apprenticeships are often a collaboration between training providers and employers. Many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may not have the capacity to support Welsh language education on top of their existing commitments. There should be guidance and incentives for employers to support Welsh language development within their apprenticeship programs.

Flexibility in Implementation

Sector-Specific Considerations: Not all sectors have the same language needs, so the bill should allow flexibility in how Welsh language goals are applied across industries. For example, apprenticeships in healthcare or public services may have different Welsh language requirements compared to apprenticeships in engineering or IT. The bill should consider sector-specific Welsh language benchmarks to ensure that the language goals are meaningful and relevant.

Phased Approach: We recommend a phased approach to implementing the Welsh language learning goals in apprenticeships. This would allow providers and employers time to build capacity and adjust their programs to include Welsh language learning effectively, without compromising the quality of vocational training.

Collaboration with the National Welsh Language Learning Institute

Partnerships for Welsh Language Learning: The establishment of the National Welsh Language Learning Institute ('yr Athrofa Dysgu Cymraeg Genedlaethol') presents an opportunity for apprenticeship providers to collaborate in the delivery of Welsh language training. We suggest the bill outlines clear mechanisms for how the Institute will work with apprenticeship providers to create accessible Welsh language programs that complement apprentices' vocational education, we suggest this is undertaken with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol as they already provide support, training, resources and work closely with providers.

Monitoring and Accountability

While the bill seeks to create a chain of accountability between linguistic planning at school, local authority, and national levels, it should also include specific provisions for how Welsh language goals will be monitored within apprenticeships. This could involve regular reviews of how Welsh language training is incorporated into apprenticeship frameworks, and how it contributes to the overall linguistic goals of Wales.

Codes and data

The design of a code of Welsh language ability would be welcomed as there is much confusion in this field. Questions arise as to how WBL learners would classify themselves e.g., through questionnaire, online test, structured tests?

The adoption of a CEFR type code could potentially clarify the position of learners in the 'non-fluent' category which is extremely varied.

Conclusion

We believe the bill represents a significant step toward the revitalisation of the Welsh language, and we are committed to playing our part in this national endeavour. However, we urge the Welsh Government to ensure that the specific needs and challenges faced by apprenticeship providers and employers are addressed within the legislative framework. By working collaboratively and ensuring adequate resources and flexibility, we can help apprentices acquire both the vocational and linguistic skills they need to thrive in a bilingual Wales.

We look forward to continuing dialogue on this important issue and working together to meet the goals of this bill.