

## **CFA08 Colleges Wales**

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Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

[Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol](#) | [Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee](#)

### **[Cymraeg i bawb?](#) | [Cymraeg for all?](#)**

Ymateb gan: Colegau Cymru | Evidence from: Colleges Wales

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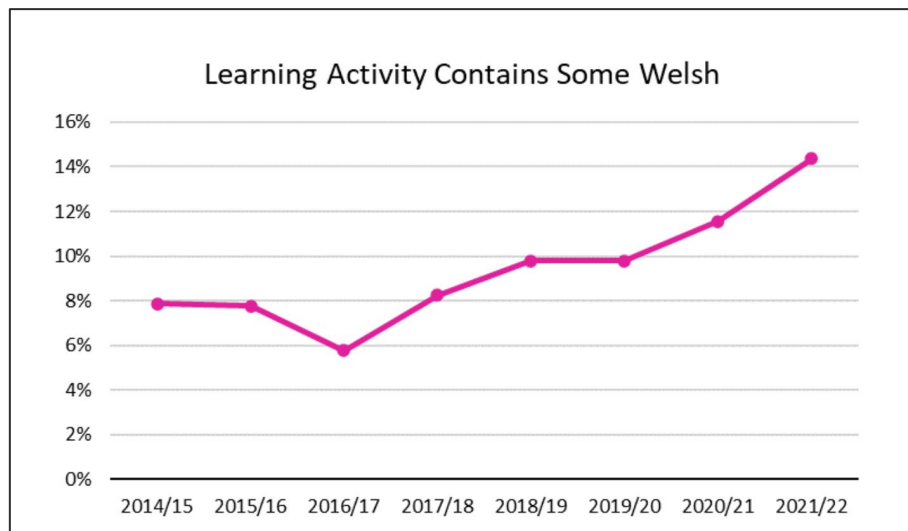
ColegauCymru is an education charity; we promote the public benefit of post-compulsory education and learning. As the representative organisation of all colleges in Wales, we are well positioned to be able to outline the further education (FE) sector's views on the use of Welsh language and whether it is inclusive within an educational and vocational training setting. ColegauCymru is supportive of the Welsh Government's aspiration of one million Welsh speakers. We recognise the importance to trying to develop people's Welsh language skills not just for use within an educational context but also in the workplace and in communities. If we can increase the opportunities learning and teaching through the medium of Welsh, as well as bilingual delivery, we can further develop learners' skills and confidence to use it in the workplace and in everyday settings.

### **Learner numbers**

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StatsWales data shows the percentage of total learning activities containing some Welsh language in colleges has increased since 2014/15. The categories that are included in this include those delivered entirely in Welsh, those that are delivered bilingually, and those that contain either a 'small' or 'significant' amount of Welsh in their delivery.

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At Coleg Sir Gâr and Coleg Ceredigion, learners have had the opportunity to have a Welsh lesson in addition to their main course, 'Welsh for the Workplace.' When the scheme was introduced, 'Public Services' and 'Health and Social Care' were the departments receiving Welsh lessons. This has now been expanded to offer Welsh lessons in various subjects, including Art, Media Studies, and Animal Care. Feedback from learners has been:

“On the weekend, I work in a Care Home, and I've noticed that the residents are much happier when I use Welsh with them.” - [REDACTED]

“I have been using Welsh with customers in the shop where I work on weekends.” - [REDACTED]

“I give swimming lessons to young children, and the kids feel much more confident when I use Welsh with them.” - [REDACTED]

“I have been using Welsh in the restaurant, and I've gotten more tips!” - [REDACTED]

Our member colleges comply with the Welsh Language Standards as set by the Welsh Language Commissioner and provide a range of services to learners bilingually and try to encourage the use of Welsh language in all aspects of college life.

## **Cymraeg Gwaith**

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The 'Cymraeg Gwaith' project, established by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, is designed to boost the confidence and the skills of beginner and intermediate

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Welsh speaking staff at colleges across in Wales. Cymraeg Gwaith is funded by the National Centre for Learning Welsh and administered by the Coleg. The scheme offers 120 hours of language training in a year to staff at all levels, even with entry level proficiency – with a view to complete the entire level before the end of the academic year. Each college has a Cymraeg Gwaith tutor who run workshops to develop the Welsh language skills of staff. The staff taking part have the choice to self-study or participate in weekly classes and tutor sessions which are available to support new learners as well as starting and supporting conversations to support the learners. They have developed a further project named Cymraeg Gwaith+ which supports staff at an intermediate proficiency level to develop their skills up to a fluency levels.

Over 380 staff throughout Wales have joined the Cymraeg Gwaith project this academic year, and the aim is for 80% of these learners to be from staff that deals with learners on a day-to-day basis as well as 30% of learners being from priority areas (Health and Social Care, Agriculture, Sports and Leisure, Creative Industries, Business and Construction). Data this year shows that there are 35% of learners from priority areas and 71% of staff from the academic departments from the organisations. It should be noted that these figures vary from college to college depending on previous proficiency levels of staff and how much the college advertises this project. At Coleg Gwent, with typically fewer Welsh speakers in the locality, 72% of learners in the project come from the priority areas. This shows a positive sign that these priority areas will have staff with the skills to speak and make specialised conversations in Welsh about their given industries in the future.

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### **Bilingual course availability**

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Colleges report successes in recruiting learners to Welsh medium and bilingual courses. For example, Coleg Gwent, supported by Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, has increased its bilingual learners in key areas of study including Children and Health Care from 7% to 52% over the last five years by creating an access to bilingual taught modules and classes to encourage skills development in both languages. This highlights that more learners are entering college with bilingual proficiency. It also indicates that learners are eager to further develop their skills in both languages, and enhance their career prospects. These initiatives not only support the everyday use of Welsh being spoken in a day-to-day setting but can also encourage and increase the confidence of people who may not have previously been confident before these sessions.

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## **Apprenticeships**



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If we are to meet the one million Welsh speakers by 2050 target and especially to encourage more Welsh to be spoken in areas where there are fewer Welsh speakers, it is essential that a whole education system approach is taken, and employers need play their part. Colleges have well-established links to employers, and consideration should always be given to ensure robust transition arrangements for learners, especially for those learners who have previously been taught through the medium of Welsh. It is positive to see the rise in apprentices undertaking a bilingual course from 10% in 2016 to 25% in 2022. This figure can be explained by a rising number of apprentices completing elements of their apprenticeship bilingually. However, there is still a significant need for investment within apprenticeships in order to find staff and employers that have the availability and capacity to complete the apprenticeship in bilingually or in either language.

## **Investing in the language**

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Ensuring that the bilingual uplift supports and rewards development is essential. An ongoing challenge faced by colleges is ensuring there are enough lecturers with the skills required to teach through the medium of Welsh. This is especially challenging in some sectors, where the lecturer must be a dual professional, with both first-hand industry experience, and Welsh language teaching skills. While a number of organisations have a role to play, and collaboration is to be welcomed, the scale of the challenge facing the sector in terms of teacher shortages requires clear and firm leadership at a national level to drive the agenda ahead. To meet the Welsh Government's 2050 target for Welsh speakers, significant investment is needed. Whilst it is optimistic to see the successes so far, these project and activities need investment to continue and to help meet the Welsh Government targets.

If the Committee would welcome a visit to a college as part of its inquiry, or you require any further information, please contact   


Yours sincerely,

Rachel Cable

Director of Policy and Public Affairs

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