



*Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all*

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales

**A report on**

**South West Wales Welsh for Adults Regional Centre  
Academi Hywel Teifi  
Swansea University  
Singleton Park  
Swansea  
SA2 8PP**

**Date of inspection: March 2011**

**by**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**



During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

**Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?**

**Key Question 2: How good is provision?**

**Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?**

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the provider's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

<b>Judgement</b>	<b>What the judgement means</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
<b>Good</b>	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
<b>Adequate</b>	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

The report was produced in accordance with section 77 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

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## Context

The South West Wales Welsh for Adults Centre was established in Swansea University in May 2006 as one of six regional centres set up by the Welsh Assembly Government to lead the field.

The Centre serves a region that covers four local authorities – Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea. The region has a population of 644,742. It is a large area and its social and economic characteristics vary greatly from urban areas with a high population density, which are found mainly in the city of Swansea and the neighbouring industrial valleys, to rural and scattered communities in the north of Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. Many communities in the region experience a high level of deprivation, particularly in the Swansea area and the industrial towns and valleys of Neath Port Talbot, along with south east Carmarthenshire and the harbour towns on the banks of the River Cleddau.

There is considerable variation in the number and percentage of those in the region who can speak Welsh. The percentage of Welsh speakers in individual wards varies from 74.9% in the community of Quarter Bach, Carmarthenshire to 6.4% in St. Thomas, Swansea.

The Centre has established third party delivery agreements with five other organisations, namely Gower College Swansea, Neath Port Talbot College, Carmarthenshire County Council, Pembrokeshire County Council and University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Approximately half of the learning provision is delivered directly by the University and the other half through third party agreements. There are 145 tutors working on the Welsh for Adults provision in the region who are registered as tutors with the Centre.

A series of supplementary courses are held throughout the region, including 'Sadyrnau Siarad' (Saturday Schools) and block courses over a number of days at weekends or during holiday periods. The Centre also markets and delivers Welsh at Work courses to meet the needs of employers in the region.

In 2009-2010, the total number of learners enrolled on Welsh for Adults courses varied between organisations across the regional centre, with 2,282 at Swansea University, 919 at Pembrokeshire County Council, 798 at Carmarthenshire County Council, 416 at Neath Port Talbot College, 210 at Swansea College, 168 at University of Wales Trinity Saint David and 83 at Gorseinon College.

The total number of enrolments at the regional centre for 2009-10 was 4,876.

## Summary

<b>The provider's current performance</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>The provider's prospects for improvement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>

### Current performance

The good features at South West Wales Welsh for Adults Centre include:

- enthusiastic learners;
- tutors that provide a good standard of care, guidance and support;
- a range of Welsh courses at every level throughout the region;
- good links with a variety of agencies and voluntary organisations in the area;
- a fair reflection of the provision's strengths and weaknesses in the self-assessment report; and
- a good match, in general, between the centre's observations and Estyn's observations.

However, the current performance is adequate because of:

- the variation in learners' standards and achievements between providers across the region;
- shortcomings in teaching standards in a minority of the classes that were observed;
- low attendance levels in a minority of classes;
- shortcomings in the current programme for monitoring and supporting tutors; and
- the inconsistent use of individual learning plans throughout the provision.

### Prospects for improvement

The regional centre's prospects for improvement are adequate because:

- recently, the regional centre went through a restructuring process and it is currently too early to see the effects of the new systems in practice;
- the centre has made insufficient progress during the last three years in terms of increasing the percentage of classes in which the teaching is good; and
- the centre collects and uses a good range of data about learners' progress, but the process of challenging performance and setting targets for improvement has not been established consistently throughout the region.

## **Recommendations**

In order to improve, the regional centre needs to:

- R1 raise completion and success rates across providers in the region;
- R2 increase attendance levels in classes where they are low;
- R3 improve quality systems to ensure that the progress and continuity of different groups of learners are tracked more effectively throughout the region;
- R4 ensure that teaching staff receive more support visits; and
- R5 improve communication between the provider and third party providers in the region on a strategic level.

### **What happens next?**

The regional centre will include its response to the above recommendations in the quality development plan provided to the Department of Education and Skills. The provider will receive a letter from Estyn stating that Estyn will conduct a monitoring visit in about 12 months.

## Main findings

### Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

Adequate

#### Standards: Adequate

The total number of enrolments on Welsh for Adults courses in the region has increased from 4,772 in 2007-2008 to 4,876 in 2009-2010. In general, the majority of learners complete their courses successfully and there is a positive trend in the results over the last three years, from 54% in 2007-2008 to 75% in 2009-2010.

According to the data for 2009-2010, there is considerable variation in completion rates per course across the region. The completion rates tend to be lower on the Entry Intensive courses (51%) and Entry Level 1 courses (58%) than the higher level courses. The completion rates on the higher level courses, namely the Intermediate, Foundation and Advanced courses, are approximately 80%. Variation can also be seen between the completion rates of individual providers. The best rates are at Gorseinon College (78%), Pembrokeshire County Council (72%) and Neath Port Talbot College (71%), while the completion rates are slightly lower at Swansea College (66%) and Swansea University (66%).

The majority of learners make good progress in their learning. They develop their Welsh language and communication skills well. On the whole, the majority of learners recall previously learnt forms well, have accurate pronunciation and speak with increasing confidence in line with their experience and the level of the class. A minority of learners take advantage of informal learning opportunities outside of classes to consolidate their communication skills. In a minority of classes, learners make slow progress, they depend heavily on the tutor to complete tasks and they lack the confidence to communicate in Welsh in the classroom.

Overall, the independent learning skills of the majority of learners are good. They use additional resources such as television programmes, the internet and a range of commercially recorded materials to support their learning. A minority of learners take advantage of a number of informal learning opportunities offered by the regional centre and its partners. These learners practice their language skills and benefit greatly from these experiences. A minority of learners make good use of their individual learning plans. Overall, learners do not fully understand how their individual learning plans can help them to plan their own learning. Often, they feel that these plans are not relevant to them.

At present, the provider does not have enough evidence to analyse the differences in the performance of different groups of learners; however, no differences have been seen in the performance of any particular cohort of learners during the class visits.

#### Wellbeing: Good

Most learners enjoy the lessons, are enthusiastic about their learning and take an active part in every aspect of the work. They find the lessons fun and interesting. In most classes, the learners are well-motivated and make productive use of their time

throughout the session. They enjoy learning alongside other learners from different age groups. Almost without exception, learners have a high level of respect towards each other and they are very willing to help each other across the generations during lessons.

A majority of learners are confident enough to use the language learnt during Welsh lessons in the community, when the opportunity arises.

Overall, learners are aware of health and safety issues and they enjoy learning in a safe and supportive environment. However, attendance rates are not high enough in a minority of classes throughout the provision.

<b>Key Question 2: How good is provision?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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### **Learning experiences: Good**

A comprehensive and cohesive programme of community-based classes is offered throughout the region in collaboration with third party providers.

On the whole, learners are given the opportunity to attend classes once a week or intensive provision within a reasonable distance across the region. As well as the usual provision of intensive courses, an additional 10 hour a week 'Mynediad Plus' (Entry Plus) intensive course is offered in Swansea and Carmarthen. The network of 'Siawns am Sgwrs' (Chance to Chat) courses gives learners with a better grasp of the Welsh language the opportunity to expand their use of the language in modern contexts. This provision also includes a programme of Sadyrnau Siarad (Saturday Schools) throughout the region.

The centre provides a programme of almost 30 classes tailored to meet the requirements of 18 local employers. However, the centre is not proactive enough in terms of targeting employers to extend the provision further. The centre also provides an extensive programme of Welsh classes for staff at Dyffryn Comprehensive School in Taibach and Olchfa Comprehensive School in Swansea.

The centre works in partnership with the University of Wales Trinity Saint David and the Welsh Assembly Government to provide a new sabbatical course at entry and foundation levels for Welsh second language primary school teachers in Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire.

The centre plays a key role in Swansea University's plans to increase the use of Welsh on courses and to develop the university's Welsh ethos, in general. It has established Welsh entry and foundation level courses, which are attended by academic and administrative staff. There is also specific provision for the University's Welsh speaking staff who wish to increase their confidence in using Welsh in the workplace.

The centre works effectively in partnership with Menter Iaith Cwm Gwendraeth, Twf (A Welsh Language Board project for parents) and primary schools to develop the provision of Welsh for the Family and 'Cymraeg o'r Crud' (2 Languages from Day 1)

courses. As a result of direct marketing an increasing number of parents are taking advantage of this provision.

Activities to promote learners' use of Welsh include dedicated tasks in the learning materials for the intensive courses. The series of society fairs, which are exhibitions arranged by local Welsh societies in central locations throughout the region, also provide a good opportunity for intermediate and advanced learners to come into contact with local Welsh societies. Despite this, a few learners continue to note that they are not given enough opportunities to come into contact with local Welsh speakers, particularly those on lower level courses.

The centre's latest research, 'Welsh Centres and Social Networks', is an innovative project. This project explores the contribution and impact of networks that offer learners the opportunity to increase their contact with Welsh outside of Welsh classes.

The 'Siawns am Sgwrs' classes provide ample opportunities for learners to expand their knowledge and understanding of history, politics and culture on a local and national level.

The work of strengthening the attention given to sustainable development and global citizenship began by incorporating opportunities in the learning materials for the intensive foundation course. Also, guidance has been given on these aspects as part of the staff training programme.

### **Teaching: Adequate**

Tutors foster a good relationship with learners and classes are held in a supportive environment. Continuous support and encouragement are a feature of the work across classes.

Most lessons are planned carefully to include a progression of suitable learning activities. Many tutors make appropriate use of Welsh as a medium of instruction and communication with learners. Where the teaching is most effective, learners are encouraged to contribute actively and spontaneously and to extend their use of the language.

In a minority of classes, the learning has significant shortcomings that impair learners' progress in the lessons. Often in these cases, the learners' grasp of the patterns covered in the lesson is not sufficiently consolidated. As a result, not enough learners make progress in their ability to use these patterns more independently by the end of the lesson. The opportunities to work semi-independently in pairs vary excessively. In these classes, learners are not given enough opportunities to use what they have learnt in previous lessons in less structured tasks.

The majority of tutors have a good understanding of the progress made by learners and they give helpful advice on how to improve. The tutors correct learners orally in a supportive manner. There are a few examples of good practice in which learners correct their own and each other's work. On the whole, marking learners' written



work is limited to correcting linguistic errors and does not do enough to briefly identify the next steps for development. Individual learning plans are not used sufficiently to provide consistent feedback on their progress and what they need to do to improve.

The centre has led the way in introducing accreditation through WJEC credit routes by piloting accreditation schemes at entry, foundation and intermediate levels.

### **Care, support and guidance: Good**

Tutors provide a good level of individual support to learners in their classes to ensure that they enjoy the lessons and succeed on the courses. A number of tutors discuss health, wellbeing and healthy eating in their lessons. However, the partnership does not do enough to promote this aspect across the region.

The information and advice to help learners choose the correct course and venue are good. There is a wide range of information about the courses, general advice, health and safety, wellbeing, policies and information about equality available on the university's website and on partners' websites. Some very useful information booklets are available for learners that show a wide range of courses throughout the area. They include information about entry courses, intensive courses, courses for the family and workplace courses. This information booklet is distributed to every house in the region. Tutors provide learners with appropriate advice as they transfer between courses. Partners provide appropriate additional support to learners with special needs, for example, providing special equipment for learners with hearing impairments.

The centre and its partners have appropriate policies and procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults, and staff know about these arrangements. The arrangements for dealing with issues relating to protecting and safeguarding adults and the arrangements for staff training are appropriate.

### **Learning environment: Adequate**

Tutors establish an inclusive and welcoming ethos in their classes. Tutors do not discriminate against learners on any grounds and there are clear progression routes for learners that are open to everyone. An equal service is provided to all learners regardless of their background. There are effective systems in place to promote and monitor the enrolment of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds, asylum seekers and refugees.

Overall, the majority of the buildings and learning resources at the university and in the community are fit for purpose, welcoming and close to where the majority of learners live. During this inspection, the wing that houses the Centre and Academi Hywel Teifi at the University was closed due to building work.

Entry to the buildings and classes is suitable for learners with special needs. Social facilities are suitable in the majority of centres. The majority of classrooms are suitable, but a considerable number of classrooms do not create a Welsh environment or display language charts to aid learners.

There are not enough information and communication technology facilities available to learners in every community centre. Learners in these centres use very little information and communication technology to find information or additional learning resources.

There are enough appropriate resources available in the centres to support teaching and learning. These include textbooks, individual files, suitable games, interactive whiteboards, CDs and flash cards. However, the full range of materials is used very rarely to support learning during the lessons. Overall, learners are not given enough opportunities to work independently nor to use additional resources to do research during the lessons.

<b>Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
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### **Leadership: Adequate**

The centre's strategic plan sets clear aims and objectives to increase the number of Welsh speakers throughout the region and nationally. The plan considers Estyn's recommendations from inspections of adult community learning in the region and has responded to them. The strategic plan has a good effect on increasing the provision that is offered. However, the centre does not use the strategic plan effectively enough to improve quality throughout the region.

The regional centre has established an appropriate structure for arranging the provision and offers learners good opportunities to attend Welsh for Adults courses throughout the region. This structure reflects that of the national Welsh for Adults provision. The centre has established an appropriate staff structure to ensure the provision in each area, to manage business and to offer guidance to partners.

The regional centre has formed clear partnerships with third party providers to ensure extensive provision of Welsh for Adults courses at each level. However, the centre does not currently work effectively enough with third party providers to ensure that they contribute to the strategic planning process. As a result, they miss out on third party providers' experience and expertise in the strategic planning process, and not every partner has sufficient ownership of the strategic plan. The centre also misses the opportunity to include local variations in the plan.

### **Improving quality: Adequate**

Officials at the South West Wales Regional Centre collect a range of data well and use this data to monitor the provision. They monitor the performance of each area according to enrolments, completions and achievers. However, although the centre compares its results with that of other Welsh for Adults regional centres, the officers do not use this data effectively to raise the performance of learners on similar courses throughout the region. The centre does not track the progress of different groups of learners that attend different providers' courses in the region, for example learners whose first language is a foreign language and learners with additional learning needs.

The centre's quality development plan is a strategic document. It is comprehensive and gives appropriate attention to the results of the self-evaluation process. The centre acts on the recommendations of Estyn inspections of Adult Community Learning in the region.

The self-evaluation report is comprehensive and clear. The self-evaluation process includes learners' opinions and the contributions of third party providers. The report identifies the provision's main strengths and areas for improvement according to each key question. A clear match can be seen between the findings of the regional centre's self-evaluation report and the inspection's findings.

The centre has established a process of regular tutor observations. The centre intends to observe 50% of tutors every year, but it did not reach this target last year. However, while the observers give sufficient attention to the tutor's performance, there is currently not enough emphasis on learners' progress and standards. The recommendations tend to place an emphasis on improving the tutor's teaching methods, rather than focussing on learners' progress and standards, in the majority of the observation reports that were seen.

Overall, the process of ensuring consistency is not effective enough to address the disparities that exist between the standards of learners and tutors across the region. As a result, the centre has not made enough progress over the last three years in increasing the percentage of classes in which the standard of teaching is good.

### **Partnership working: Adequate**

The regional centre works well with partners such as the Welsh Government, the University of Wales Swansea, third party providers, the local Adult Community Learning partnership, Welsh language initiatives and schools at a local level. The regional centre employs officers located in each of the four counties in the region. The centre also arranges courses in the workplace and courses for staff at the University and staff at Olchfa and Dyffryn Comprehensive Schools.

The regional centre has forged strategic partnerships with third party providers to provide a comprehensive programme of courses throughout the region. Every third party provider contributes towards conducting this programme by agreement. The centre co-ordinates this programme, as well as directly providing a significant proportion of these courses.

The region's third party providers are important providers and they bring a range of additional resources to the centre. They also extend the influence of the centre across the region by offering local representation. The centre does not always work effectively enough with third party providers as joint strategic partners. As a result, the centre misses out on the strategic perspective of these third party providers and all the experience they have of working in the local area.

While every provider is able to contribute to the quality improvement process, the centre does not use the expertise of all providers effectively enough. For example, there are not enough observations across different providers or enough moderation of learners' work across providers.

**Resource management: Adequate**

The regional centre manages its resources effectively. Benchmarking information is used by managers to direct resources at areas to improve standards throughout the region. However, benchmarking information is not used sufficiently to compare areas in the region in terms of levels, in order to set aims and targets to improve quality.

The centre is staffed appropriately to deliver the curriculum and staff are deployed effectively to ensure the best use of their time and skills. Overall, the centre satisfies staff development needs to meet curriculum requirements, although not enough is done to take advantage of the expertise of third party providers' staff. At present, the centre does not offer enough support to inexperienced tutors.

The centre works adequately with third party providers to ensure that appropriate learning resources are available to all learners throughout the region. However, a minority of these resources are old and need updating.

The centre ensures that third party providers are adequately funded to offer suitable provision throughout the region.

The centre provides its learners with adequate value for money.

## Appendix 1

### **Learner Satisfaction**

Estyn received 321 completed questionnaires from learners. The learners completed these questionnaires voluntarily during February and March 2011. Estyn asked the South West Wales Regional Centre to include a range of learners from their current provision.

Learners were very positive about the provision they receive from the providers within the regional centre. Almost all learners enjoy learning and believe that their tutors teach and support them well. They believe that they make good progress and that their learning helps them to achieve their objectives. They would recommend the provider to others.

Most learners consider that their learning helps them to extend their knowledge and skills. They feel that the course is what they expected and that they were given good information about their learning programmes. Most learners believe that the staff give helpful feedback on how to improve their work. They feel safe in the classroom and the learners support each other well.

A minority of learners do not believe that their learning has helped to improve their attitude towards keeping safe and healthy.

## Appendix 2

### The inspection team

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