
Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response

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Dyddiad / Date:	17/07/20
Pwnc / Subject:	Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales

Background information about Estyn

Estyn is the Office of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales. As a Crown body, Estyn is independent of the Welsh Government.

Estyn's principal aim is to raise the standards and quality education and training in Wales. This is primarily set out in the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and the Education Act 2005. In exercising its functions, Estyn must give regard to the:

- Quality of education and training in Wales;
- Extent to which education and training meets the needs of learners;
- Educational standards achieved by education and training providers in Wales;
- Quality of leadership and management of those education and training providers;
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of learners; and,
- Contribution made to the well-being of learners.

Estyn's remit includes (but is not exclusive to) nurseries and non-maintained settings, primary schools, secondary schools, independent schools, pupil referrals units, further education, adult community learning, local government education services, work-based learning, and teacher education and training.

Estyn may give advice to the Assembly on any matter connected to education and training in Wales. To achieve excellence for learners, Estyn has set three strategic objectives:

- Provide accountability to service users on the quality and standards of education and training in Wales;
- Inform the development of national policy by the Welsh Government;
- Build capacity for improvement of the education and training system in Wales.

This response is not confidential.

Response

Introduction

The CQFW forms part of the context of Estyn's evaluations of providers' work. For example, when considering the standards and provision at a further education college, secondary school or work-based learning training provider, we draw on a common understanding derived from the CQFW of the expectations of learners, and the demands of a course at level 1, level 2 etc. However, Estyn's inspection framework does not look explicitly at the CQFW and we are not a member of the CQFW Advisory Group.

Overall, we agree that the CQFW provides a useful high-level framework for those designing qualifications and curricula, for education professionals generally and for those, such as employers or learners, trying to understand and interpret the qualifications system.

There is a useful range of information about the CQFW on the website. In particular, the 'fan diagram' is a helpful graphic to illustrate the key concept of levels.

We agree that it is important that qualifications and accredited learning achieved in Wales are referenced to those within the UK, Europe and where possible, further afield, and, therefore, have appropriate portability.

An advisory group is important to ensuring that a wide range of stakeholders contribute to the development of the CQFW. The group should contain representation from end-users of qualifications, such as employers, and from learners. It might be helpful for the purposes of transparency to publish the membership of the Advisory Group.

The three pillars of the CQFW cover a wide spectrum of post-14 learning in Wales. In particular the Quality Assured Lifelong Learning pillar provides a framework that may be very useful in the post-coronavirus period where adult learners in particular (whether in work, in the community or those unemployed) may have reduced access to formal learning opportunities. The opportunity to recognise small bitesize chunks of learning through the unitised accredited learning (UAL) process may be very useful.

Consultation questions

Q2 – Role of responder

Meilyr Rowlands, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales

Q3 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The CQFW underpins strategies relating to qualifications and learning in Wales

- Agree

Comment

The CQFW forms a useful high-level framework for those designing qualifications and curricula, and for those, such as employers, wishing to understand the qualifications system more generally.

Q4 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The CQFW works as a functional national qualifications framework that assists with the understanding of the qualifications system and the qualifications within it.

- Agree

Q5 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: CQFW has been used to explain the changing qualifications landscape in Wales.

- No Opinion

Comment

Education professionals understand the concept of levels and credit contained in the framework, and those working in qualification design have a more detailed understanding of the CQFW. We don't have view on how extensively the framework has been used to explain the changing qualifications landscape in Wales.

Q6 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The use of the CQFW was an important element in taking forward the outcomes of the review of qualifications.

- No Opinion

Q7 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The Welsh Government provides sufficient strategic support to ensure understanding of the CQFW across the education and training sector.

- No Opinion

Q8 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: There is an effective communications and marketing strategy for the CQFW.

- Agree

Comment

The CQFW web page (<https://gov.wales/credit-and-qualifications-framework-cqfw>) contains a useful range of guides, explanatory material and case studies, relevant to a variety of audiences. The 'fan diagram' in particular is a clear graphic that explains the levels and their associated qualifications well, and is well understood by practitioners.

Q9 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is important that the CQFW is aligned with the European Qualifications Framework to enable referencing of our qualifications with the rest of Europe.

- Strongly Agree

Comment

It is important that qualifications and accredited learning achieved in Wales are referenced to those within the UK, Europe and where possible, further afield, and have appropriate 'portability'.

Q10 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is important that the CQFW is aligned with other UK frameworks to ensure maintenance of common standards, compatibility and cooperation.

- Strongly Agree

Comment

We believe it is important that qualifications and accredited learning achieved in Wales are referenced and to those within the UK, Europe and where possible, further afield, and, therefore, have appropriate portability.

Q11 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: It is important that the CQFW be advised by an Advisory Group reflecting stakeholders from all parts of the education, learning, and training sector in Wales.

- Strongly Agree

Comment

The group should contain representation from end-users of qualifications, such as employers, and from learners. It is helpful for the purposes of transparency to publish the membership of the Advisory Group. It may be helpful to consider the contribution Estyn could make to the group – for example in providing feedback on the overall use and delivery of qualifications in the providers we inspect.

Q12 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The CQFW needs to be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure it is meeting its objectives.

- Agree

Comment

We agree that regular review is necessary. However, stability is also important. We would not recommend reviewing the framework more frequently than every five years.

Q13 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The CQFW continues to be a relevant part the credit and qualifications system in the current political and policy landscape in Wales.

- Agree

Comment

The CQFW forms a useful high-level framework for those designing qualifications and curricula, and for those, such as employers, wishing to understand the qualifications system more generally.

Q14 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The current governance arrangements for the CQFW are effective.

- No Opinion

Q15 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The CQFW could be developed further.

- No Opinion

Q16 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: There are aspects of education and training in Wales or particular groups of learners which could benefit from making more use of the tools incorporated in the CQFW (credit accumulation, credit transfer, recognition of prior learning).

- Agree

Comment

The three pillars of the CQFW cover a wide spectrum of post-14 learning in Wales. In particular the Quality Assured Lifelong Learning pillar provides a framework that may be very useful in the post-coronavirus period where adult learners in particular (whether in work, in the community or those unemployed) may have reduced access to formal learning opportunities. The opportunity to recognise small 'bitesize' chunks of learning through the unitised accredited learning (UAL) process may be very useful.

Q17 - How important do you feel the following strengths of the CQFW are in the current climate (based on 2014 Review)?

- Recognition of informal learning – Very important
- Common currency - ability to articulate and communicate achievement across sectors, levels and geographical areas - Very important
- Benchmarking and mapping - Very important
- Flexibility -in programme design and avoiding repetition of learning - Very important
- Widening scope for providers and provision of qualifications - Important
- Transferability outside Wales through benchmarking to other national qualification frameworks – Very Important

Q18 - To what extent do you think that following weaknesses identified in the 2014 Review of the CQFW have been addressed?

- Lack of awareness, understanding and engagement – No opinion
- Administrative burdens-levels of bureaucracy - No opinion
- A barrier to employer engagement - No opinion

- Recognition of Prior Learning-difficulty of mapping and documenting RPL - No opinion

Q19 - Would you be prepared to take part in a short follow-up telephone interview? If so, please provide your name, phone number, and email address in the box below. Arrangements for a convenient time and phone number will be made by email. Yes / No, Contact details

Yes. Steve Bell – steve.bell@estyn.gov.wales