
Ymateb i Ymgynghoriad / Consultation Response

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Pwnc / Subject:	Cross-curricular skills frameworks

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

Overall, this guidance has strengthened the ABC steps for learning and their effectiveness within the cross-curricular skills development of the Curriculum for Wales. The steps demonstrate progression along a continuum and are consistent and accurate. The addition of key routes for learning milestones is helpful in supporting practitioners in their use of this guidance.

We feel that there is scope to further strengthen the understanding of this document by all readers with the addition of a glossary of key terms and further examples provided for each of the ABC steps. We believe that this is particularly important where language used may not be easily understood by those not working in this sector, for example, parents and carers or other adults who support children through the ABC steps of development. This guidance could also be strengthened with the addition of supplementary guidance sharing practical examples of how practitioners can use ABC steps to support cross-curricular skills progression. Finally, there is scope for improvement in relation to references to Welsh language and culture within these documents.

Consultation questions

Question 1 - Do you work in or support the delivery of education?

Yes	✓	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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(i) If yes, what is your organisation? (If no continue to iii below)

Welsh-medium school (primary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Higher education institution	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh-medium school (secondary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diocesan authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh-medium school (special)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regional consortia	<input type="checkbox"/>
English-medium school (primary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local authority	<input type="checkbox"/>
English-medium school (secondary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Private training provider	<input type="checkbox"/>
English-medium school (special)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Third sector	<input type="checkbox"/>

Bilingual school (primary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Government	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bilingual school (secondary)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult community learning	<input type="checkbox"/>
Welsh-medium middle school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Awarding organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
English-medium middle school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teaching union	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pupil referral unit (PRU)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regulatory body (includes Inspectorate) Estyn	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Special school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Governing body	<input type="checkbox"/>
Funded non-maintained setting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further education college	<input type="checkbox"/>		

(ii) What is your primary role?

Headteacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chancellor/vice-chancellor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lecturer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pioneer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newly qualified teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Governor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching assistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	Challenge advisor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	School improvement officer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supply teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspector	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Principal/vice-principal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early Years advisory teacher (or equivalent)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

(iii) If you do not work in or support the delivery of education, in what capacity would you like to provide feedback?

Parent or carer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adult 18-plus (not a parent or carer)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Apprentice	<input type="checkbox"/>

Child or young person (under 18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (please specify):	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student/academic	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

(iv) Are you providing feedback on behalf of an organisation or group?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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(v) If 'yes' please specify.

Estyn

Question 2 – To what extent do you agree or disagree with the changes to the ABC Steps within the Literacy and Numeracy Framework and the Digital Competence Framework?

Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strongly agree	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you do not agree with the changes, please explain why:

N/A

Question 3 – The Frameworks include the key Routes for Learning milestones. The intension is to provide practitioners with an understanding of prior pre-requisite learning. Is this helpful?

Extremely helpful	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Very helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Slightly helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please explain your answer:

The inclusion of the key Routes for Learning milestones within the ABC steps documents for literacy, numeracy and digital competency could be extremely helpful for supporting practitioners with understanding the pre-requisite learning
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required for learners. The addition of this information could support practitioners in identifying any gaps in learning which could hinder the development of these skills. This would allow practitioners the opportunity to target skill areas which need to be developed further. Also, the addition of the key Routes of Learning milestones support the understanding of progress as a continuum and support the consistent small steps of progress which should be made by learners.

Question 4 – Do the revised ABC Steps support practitioners to plan for learning progression and personalisation between steps?

Yes	✓	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please explain your answer:

The ABC steps give practitioners a framework to monitor the development of learners. These steps are broad, showing learning as a continuum, allowing the opportunity for planning a variety of activities to support progress between steps. The steps are not prescriptive, they allow practitioners the freedom to plan activities appropriate to the individual needs of learners.

Question 5 – Do you agree with the inclusion of motor function development from gross motor to fine motor skills within the Literacy and Numeracy Framework ABC Steps?

Strongly disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly agree	✓
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Please explain your answer:

The inclusion of motor function development from gross to fine motor skills within these documents is helpful and an accurate reflection of progress steps during this phase of learning. These skills underpin the development of many steps throughout these documents and should be considered across the curriculum. For many learners, the development of these skills can delay the development of further skills. For example, delays in the acquisition of gross motor skills can impact on developing writing skills. In addition to this, many learners who will be

assessed on the ABC steps may have additional learning needs (ALN). For these learners, specialist provision, such as occupational therapy, may be in place to support their development. The inclusion of motor skills in these steps will support close working between class teachers and specialist staff for the holistic development of learners' skills.

Question 6 – Some learners develop alternative methods for handwriting due to physical sensory difficulties. Should an additional element be added to the Writing strand of the Literacy Framework to recognise the development and progression of these skills (i.e. producing text without pen and pencil)?

Yes	✓	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please provide details, explaining why:

We believe that the addition of this element of writing would be beneficial for both learners and practitioners. Some learners may never be able to develop the skills to write with a pencil, however, they may be able to acquire skills allowing them to write fluently through other means, for example typing. The addition of these skills will ensure that teachers consider that physical sensory difficulties need not be a barrier to the development of good writing skills. In addition to this, it will provide practitioners with the means to monitor the development of these skills in line with their peer group (as it is important to note that some pupils who struggle with physical sensory difficulties may not have a learning disability).

Question 7 – Are there any ABC Step statements that you feel are too detailed/not detailed enough? Please provide details, explaining why.

We feel that the steps in these documents are consistent, accurate and appropriately detailed. However, there is scope to strengthen the wider understanding of these steps with the addition of examples and a glossary of key terms. For example, a glossary of key terms to explain certain phrases such as 'vestibular' or 'proprioceptive' would ensure good understanding for all readers. Also, some steps could be strengthened with the addition of examples to aid understanding, such as literacy steps, reading strategies, B steps, 'discriminate between symbolic representation'. Or within digital competency, data and information literacy, B step, 'I can understand that one item can be represented by another means'. Exemplification could make the document and guidance more accessible to all, including parents and support staff.

Question 8 – What further support materials would be helpful?

We feel that the support materials already mentioned in Question 7 would be helpful. In addition, further guidance, such as specific case studies on the implementation of these steps in the wider curriculum would be helpful, particularly for the promotion of Welsh language and culture.

Question 9 – Learners may spend a considerable amount of their time learning within the A/B/C steps. Do the revised ABC Steps indicate the learning required to support progression?

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please provide more detail:

These ABC steps demonstrate the skills required to make progress across the areas of literacy, numeracy and digital competency. These steps are clear, consistent and show what progress in these areas looks like. They also demonstrate that progress happens along a continuum. The steps in the document provide suitable guidance for the learning required to support progression. We feel that it is positive that the guidance is not over prescriptive and allows practitioners to make decisions based on needs of learners.

Question 10 – We would like to know your views on the effects that the revised ABC Steps would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- i) opportunities for people to use Welsh
- ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Supporting comments

There is limited reference made to the Welsh language in these documents. These documents could be strengthened with the addition of further case studies demonstrating how these ABC steps could be used across the curriculum. For example, it would be helpful to include case studies about how literacy, numeracy

and digital skills are developed through the provision of Welsh language learning for English medium settings.

In addition to this, the examples included in the Welsh language documents are translations of English exemplifications. As a result, the Welsh language documents do not consider well enough the specific challenges for first and second language Welsh speakers. They do not consider the nuances of Welsh language acquisition, highlighted in our thematic report '[Welsh language acquisition](#)'. They do not provide sufficient guidance for practitioners to evaluate learners' early bilingual skills and development or consider well enough how young children often communicate by intertwining both languages. The documents focus on how learners in English-medium settings and schools in Wales develop their **English** language skills. The documents would be strengthened by considering the acquisition and development of **Welsh** language skills of learners who attend Welsh-medium and bilingual settings and schools.

The Welsh language documents would also benefit from a thorough proof-read as it contains grammatical errors e.g. Literacy "Cyfleu dewis i **oedloyn** sylwgar [37]"

Question 11 – Please also explain how you believe the revised ABC Steps could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- i) positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language
- ii) no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Supporting comments

Please see response to question 10.

Question 12 – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

There may be a minor error in the literacy framework document. Within the section titled 'listening as part of collaborative talk', A steps, the document says, 'I can show they understand a small number of words/signs for familiar objects or people.' Within this sentence 'they' should be replaced with 'I'.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: