



Arolygiaeth Ei Fawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
His Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**Report:**

**Consultation Results - Welsh for Adults (WfA)**

**December 2023**

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# Consultation Results – Welsh for Adults (WfA)

## 1. Introduction

This document contains a detailed analysis of consultation results regarding inspection arrangements for Welsh for Adults (WfA) provision.

## 2. Methodology

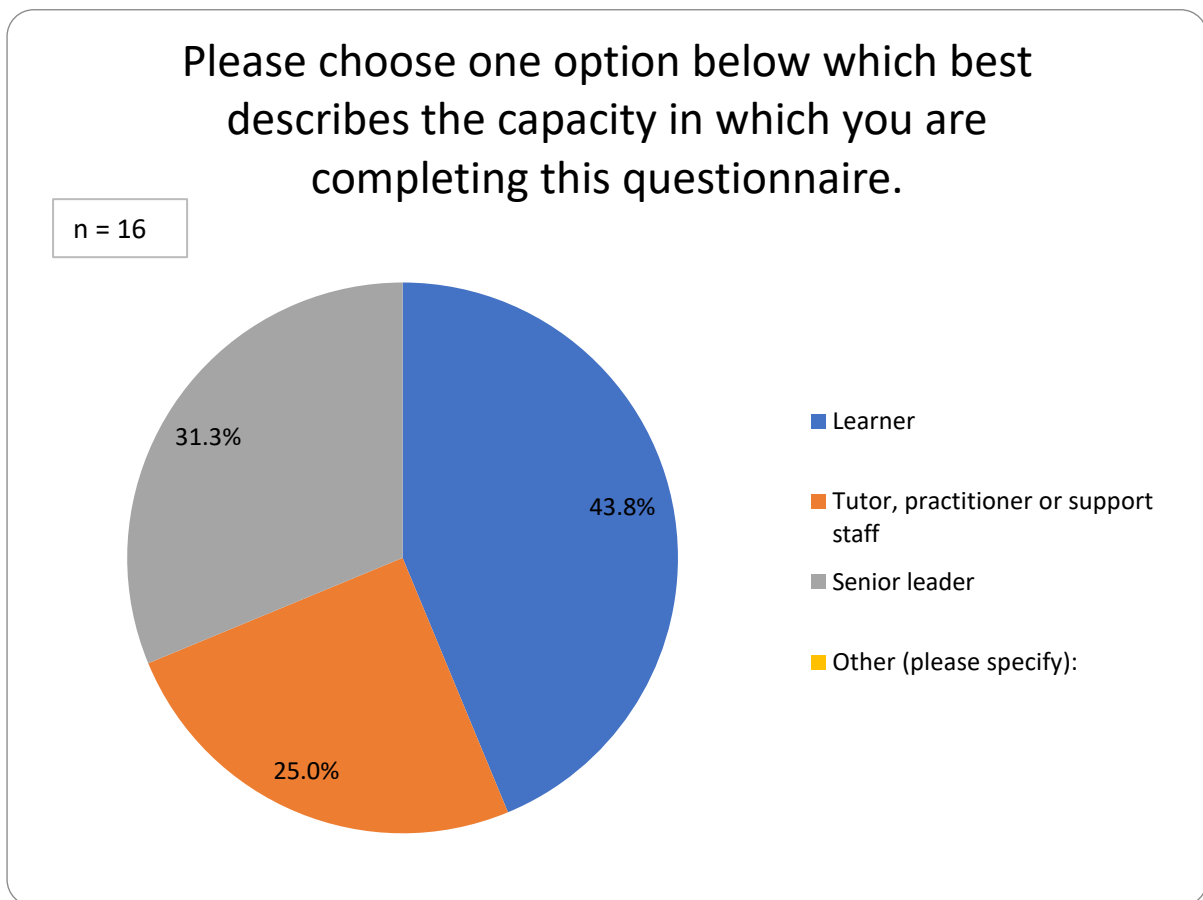
The consultation took the form of a questionnaire that was available to complete either online or offline (a PDF document to be completed and returned via e-mail or post). We launched the survey on 29 September 2023, and it closed on 30 November 2023.

The responses to the free-text questions were grouped into themes. Common responses have been included in this report to convey the key themes associated with each question – although the numbers of free-text responses are typically low and are not necessarily representative of the total population. These included a mixture of direct quotes and paraphrasing (where elements from several responses were summarised). The Estyn Writing Guide was followed when describing the proportions of responses (e.g., ‘few’ equates to less than 20% of respondents).

### 3. Profile of respondents

We received a total of 16 responses to the consultation questionnaire. All of the respondents provided responses to all of the 'menu questions' (i.e. those with a set of pre-defined answers). The number of responses to individual free-text questions varied from 2 to (i.e. 13% to 56% of respondents). The specific response rates will be included when discussing individual questions throughout the report.

**Figure 1: Please choose one option below which best describes the capacity in which you are completing this questionnaire.**



Given the high proportion of responses that were from learners, we have identified all significant differences to the responses to each individual question between learners and professionals – although the reliability of such comparisons can be misleading due to very low numbers (7 learners, 9 professionals)

## 4. Results

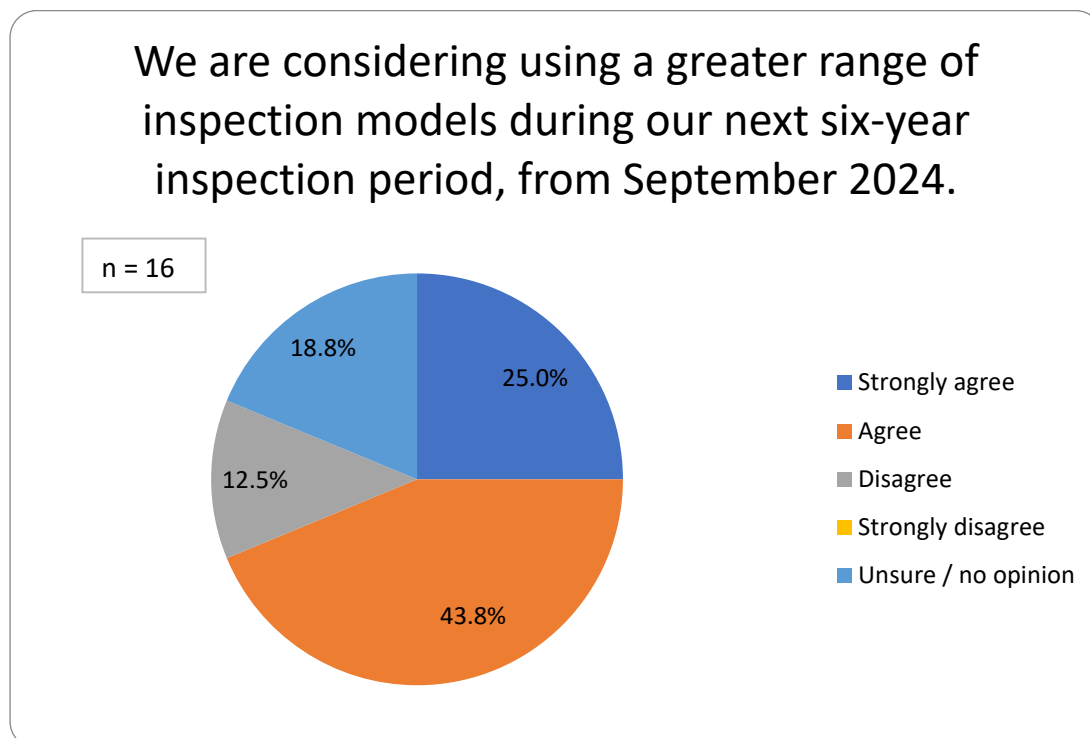
### 4.1 Responses to Proposals

Firstly, we asked respondents what their views were on the following proposal: **We are considering using a greater range of inspection models during our next six-year inspection period, from September 2024. We will tell you more about each of these below, but we are considering a combination of 3 different models:**

- **A full inspection of a sample of Learn Welsh providers.**
- **An annual themed inspection sampling provision across a number of Learn Welsh providers.**
- **An inspection of the National Centre for Learning Welsh**
- **We propose to conduct full inspections of a sample of Learn Welsh providers during the cycle.**

We will have inspected all Learn Welsh providers by the end of the current cycle and established a quality baseline. From September 2024, we do not plan to continue to carry out a full inspection of every Learn Welsh provider. We think it helpful to continue to carry out full inspections in a sample of Learn Welsh providers to help build a national picture of provision and the effectiveness of the National Centre. We anticipate carrying out around four full inspections during a six-year period. We think that this change will create time for us to do other types of inspection work, which is described in more detail in subsequent questions.

Figure 2: What are your views on this proposal?



There was a good level of support for this proposal – with 69% of those who answered agreeing (either strongly agreeing or agreeing). 13% of those who answered, disagreed with the proposal (either strongly disagreeing or disagreeing), with 19% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

There was no significant difference in responses provided between learners and professionals.

9 out of 16 (56%) respondents provided opinions and stated the reason(s) why they chose the option above. Only one topic was mentioned in more than one comment (2 out of 9 – 22%), a minority of the comments: *Seems rather unfair on the four providers chosen. These full inspections put too much pressure and stress on the providers.*

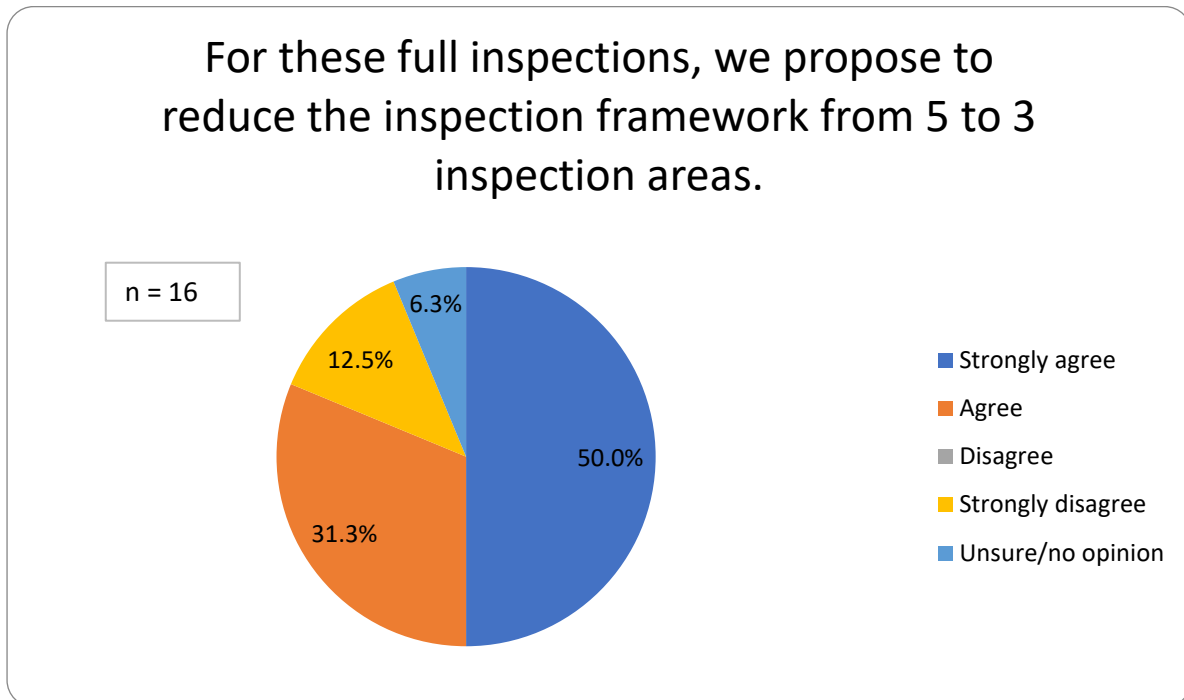
The other comments raised the following points (each one mentioned 1 out of 9 – 11%):

- *Important to have a national picture.*
- *I assume that 4 other providers will be selected in the following cycle.*
- *How confident can you be that carrying out sample inspections will ensure that all learners are receiving the same quality of teaching?*
- *The only comment we would have would be the practicality of using peer inspectors in the thematic inspections i.e. are there enough of them?*
- *It will of course depend on what you use this time for, but the extra time created by your not inspecting all regions might allow you to investigate how best to be flexible during those inspections you do carry out giving feedback to those you find subpar and improving by using use cases of the better regions to shape the subpar regions and provide follow up opportunities.*
- *We are investing heavily as a nation in this, and it will be good to know the degree to which quality and consistency is being provided across the board. My own experiences of Dysgu Cymraeg online have been outstanding but I have heard from other learners that their experiences are not so positive.*
- *The scope of the Centre's work has, and will, change continuously and we would be keen to benefit from Estyn's input into that work through thematic surveys.*

We then asked respondents what their views were on the following proposal: **For these full inspections, we propose to reduce the inspection framework from 5 to 3 inspection areas.**

**Our current inspection framework has 5 inspection areas. Reducing to 3 inspection areas will help us to make better links between the quality of work and the impact for learners. It also helps us to avoid some duplication in our guidance and reports.**

**Figure 3: What are your views on this proposal?**



There was a strong level of support for this proposal – with 81% of those who answered agreeing (either strongly agreeing or agreeing). 13% of those who answered, strongly disagreed with the proposal, with 6% unsure or having no opinion.

There was no significant difference in responses provided between learners and professionals.

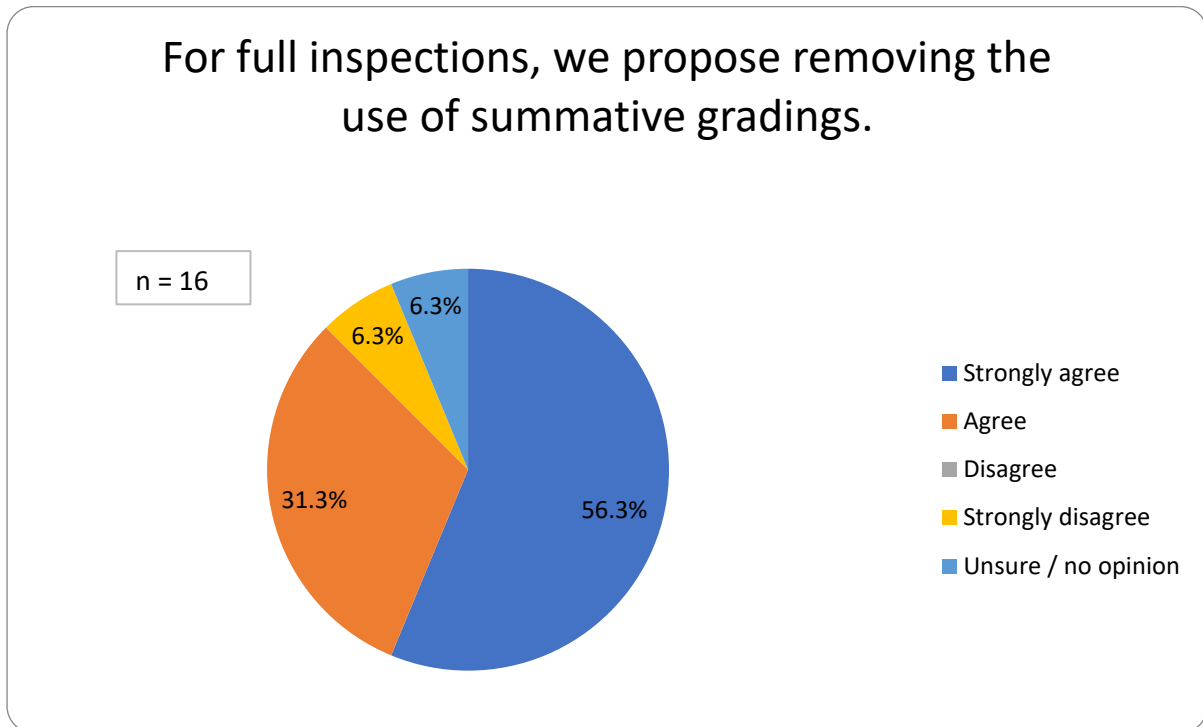
5 out of 16 (31%) respondents provided opinions and stated the reason(s) why they chose the option above. The most common theme (3 out of 5 – 60%) was an agreement that this proposal is *clear* and *makes sense*.

1 comment was received asking *can't MA2 and MA3 be combined?*

We then asked about the opinion on the following statement: **For full inspections, we propose removing the use of summative gradings.**

**We propose the removal of summative gradings, such as ‘Good’. This mirrors the approach across almost all of Estyn’s inspection work. We are also of the view that this is fair to all providers if we sample providers for full inspection. We will continue to write about strengths and areas for improvement of any provider in our reports.**

**Figure 4: What are your views on this proposal?**



There was a strong level of support for this proposal – with 88% of those who answered agreeing (either strongly agreeing or agreeing). 6% of those who answered, disagreed with the proposal (either strongly disagreeing or disagreeing), with 6% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

There was no significant difference in responses provided between learners and professionals.

5 out of 16 (31%) respondents provided opinions and stated the reason(s) why they chose the option above. The majority of comments (4 out of 5 – 80%) are fully supportive: *the focus needs to be on targeting areas for improvement alongside highlighting strengths. A less judgmental attitude will remove the ‘fear’ and will allow for a freer, more meaningful dialogue, and therefore improvements/changes.*

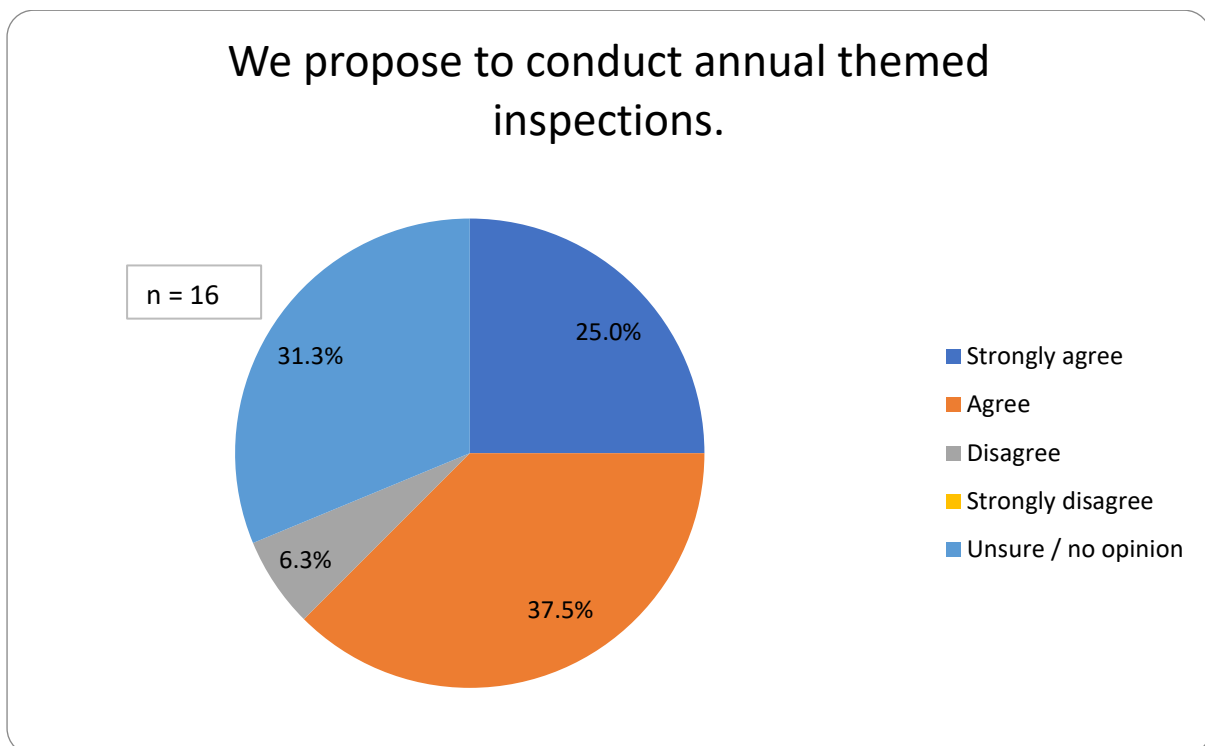
The one comment which disagreed with the proposal stated: *It is weak and frankly ill judged to remove the clear understandable judgement that Estyn (and Ofsted) have used so well for a long time on the basis of one media witch-hunt.* Although judgements have continued to be used in our Welsh for Adults inspections, we have removed them across many other sectors over the last 4 years.



We then asked about the proposal: **We propose to conduct annual themed inspections.**

**This will constitute the main focus of our inspection activity with the sector. Each year, we will produce national reports on a range of themes relevant to the sector with the aim of highlighting effective practice and helping the sector to improve. We will visit or survey a sample of providers as part of this work and will normally visit all providers at least twice during a 3-year period. We will aim to confirm our theme(s) for each academic year during the previous summer term.**

**Figure 5: What are your views on this proposal?**



There was a good level of support for this proposal – with 63% of those who answered agreeing (either strongly agreeing or agreeing). 6% of those who answered, disagreed with the proposal (either strongly disagreeing or disagreeing), with 31% neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Learners were more likely than professionals to be ‘unsure or have no opinion’ on this proposal.

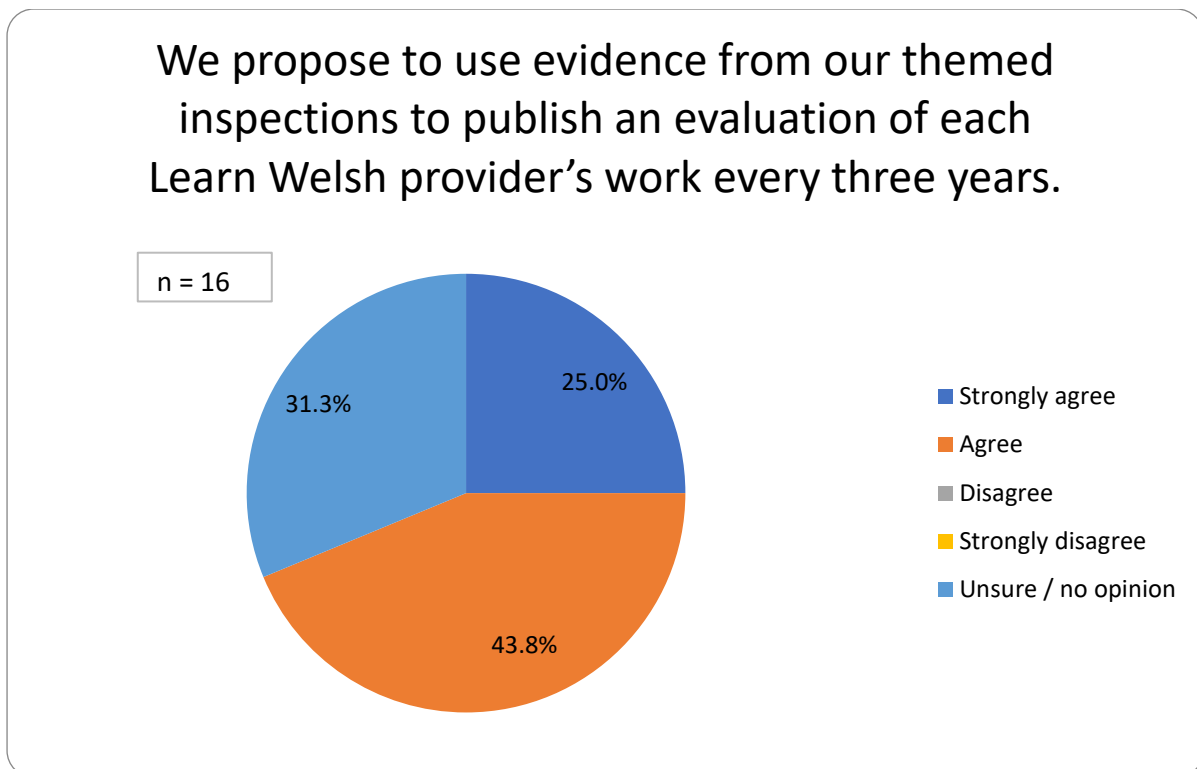
6 out of 16 (38%) respondents provided opinions and stated the reason(s) why they chose the option above. Half the comments stated that they *agree - but haven't seen the themes yet. Will there be an option to review and agree those themes with Estyn?*

A minority (2 out of 6 – 33%) stated that *2 inspections in a 3 year period seems to be an increased burden on the providers.*

We then asked for views on the following: **We propose to use evidence from our themed inspections to publish an evaluation of each Learn Welsh provider’s work every three years.**

In accordance with the principle of focussing resources on continuous improvement we propose to visit all providers at least twice every 3 years during themed inspection activity. Providers will receive a letter outlining our evaluations of specific aspects of their work at the end of each 3-year period. We propose to publish this letter. This will ensure that providers, learners and other stakeholders receive an evaluation of the effectiveness of the provision, in place of a full inspection.

Figure 6: What are your views on this proposal?



There was a level of support for this proposal – with 69% of those who answered agreeing (either strongly agreeing or agreeing).

Professionals were more likely than learners to be ‘unsure or have no opinion’ on this proposal.

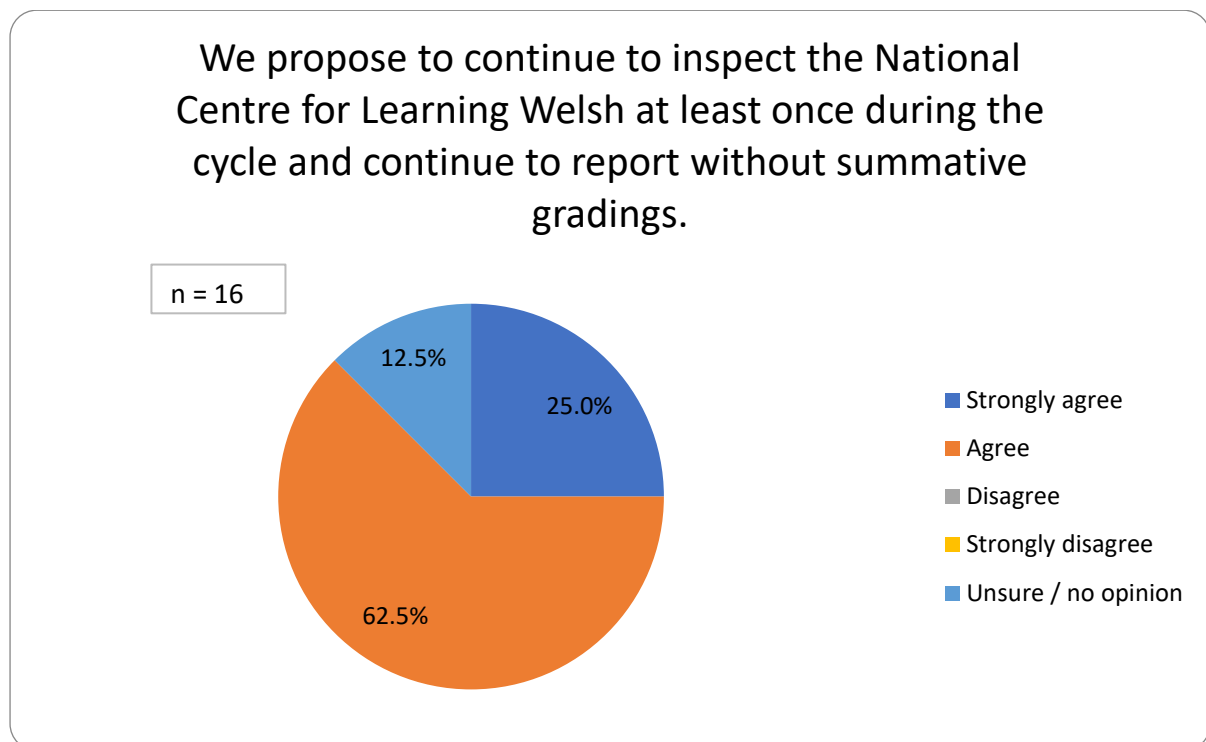
4 out of 16 (25%) respondents provided opinions and stated the reason(s) why they chose the option above. Although they each focussed on different topics:

- *Transparency is key.*
- *I am not sure how it will help learners in any way to read this document.*
- *Will providers have enough forewarning about the agreed Themes?*
- *We are happy to be flexible and to adapt out processes around this proposal.*

We then asked for views on the following: **We propose to continue to inspect the National Centre for Learning Welsh at least once during the cycle and continue to report without summative gradings.**

**By the end of the current cycle, we will have inspected the National Centre twice. Currently we do not apply summative gradings in these inspections. We propose to continue to inspect without applying summative gradings. We will inspect the National Centre at least once during the 2024-2030 cycle. Inspections of the National Centre will build on the evidence from themed inspections and any full inspections of individual providers.**

**Figure 7: What are your views on this proposal?**



There was a level of support for this proposal – with 88% of those who answered agreeing (either strongly agreeing or agreeing). No one disagreed with the proposal.

There was no significant difference in responses provided between learners and professionals. Only 2 out of 16 (13%) respondents provided opinions and stated the reason(s) why they chose the option above:

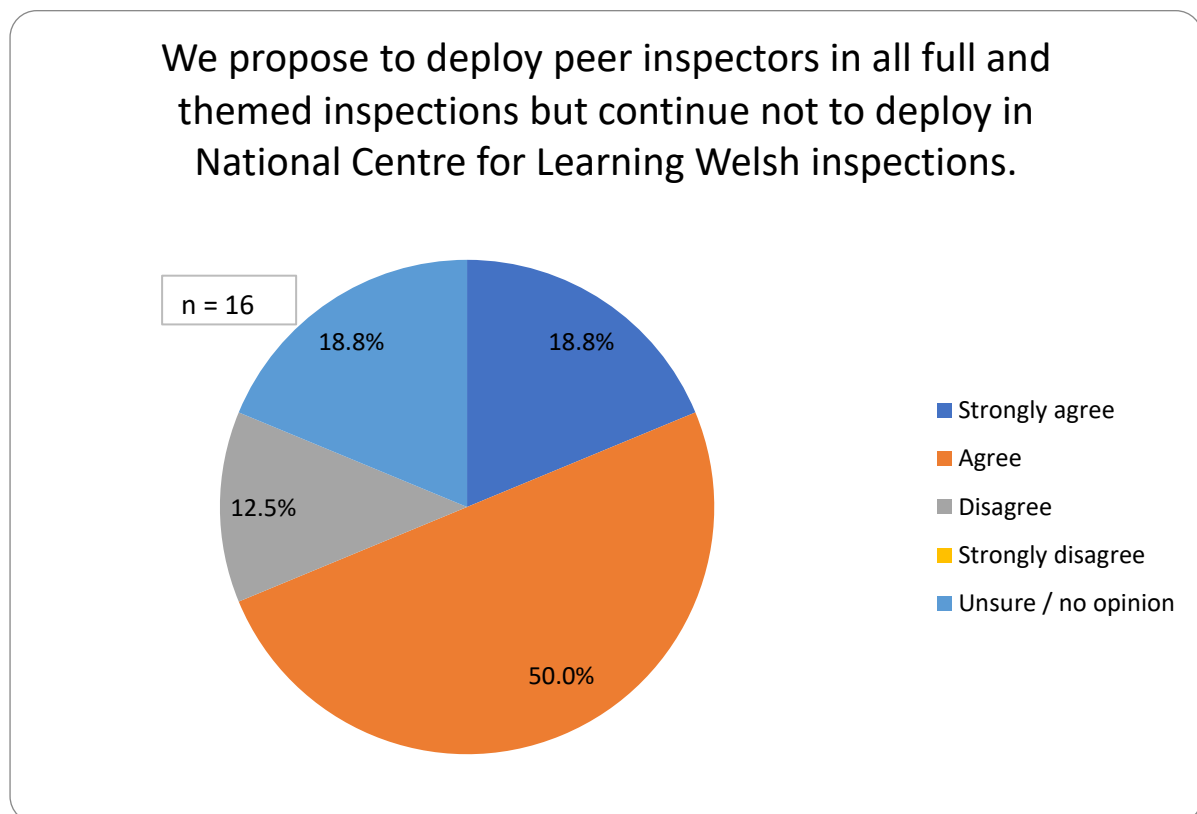
- *It's important to look at the sector as a whole.*
- *We welcome the continuation of this approach.*

We then asked for views on the following: **We propose to deploy peer inspectors in all full and themed inspections but continue not to deploy in National Centre for Learning Welsh inspections.**

**We value the important insights that current practitioners bring to our inspection work. We also recognise that peer inspectors also value the opportunity to learn about inspection, and to observe practice in other providers. We would like to continue to use peer inspectors within full and themed inspections.**

**The National Centre for Learning Welsh funds and quality assures the work of all Learn Welsh providers. Currently, we do not deploy peer inspectors from Learn Welsh providers on our inspections of the National Centre due to a conflict of interest. We propose to continue with this practice.**

**Figure 8: What are your views on this proposal?**



There was a level of support for this proposal – with 69% of those who answered agreeing (either strongly agreeing or agreeing). 13% of those who answered disagreed with the proposal.

There was no significant difference in responses provided between learners and professionals.

5 out of 16 (31%) respondents provided opinions and stated the reason(s) why they chose the option above. Many comments (4 out of 5 – 80%) state that *Peer Inspectors give an extremely useful level of unique insight, and their use should be*

*encouraged. Although there are practical and cost reasons why this cannot always be possible.*

We then asked for views on:

**9. At the start of this consultation we acknowledged that our inspection work needs to adapt to provide support and adequate scrutiny to a rapidly evolving sector. How well do you think the range of inspection models we are considering will support us to:**

- **provide assurance about the quality of Learn Welsh provision**
- **support continuous improvement**
- **share best practice both within Welsh for adults and across other education and training sectors**
- **focus on evaluating language acquisition initiatives that are at the core of the success of Cymraeg 2050**

**Please use the box below to give us your opinions:**

9 out of 16 (36%) respondents provided opinions on this matter.

7 of the 9 (78%) agree that the range of inspection models we are considering will support. Specifically:

- *Definitely prefer the use of strengths and opportunities rather than grading descriptors like 'good'.*
- *My experience is that inspections are more valuable when they are supportive rather than punitive.*
- *Supporting continuous improvement is uppermost in my mind.*
- *Simply having themed reports and oversight of provision will act to inform learners and improve provision.*

We then asked for views on the following:

**10. We are committed to improving the way we work and are interested in your views on how we can carry out our work more effectively. Please use the box below to provide feedback on any other aspects of Estyn's inspection arrangements.**

Only 2 out of 16 (24%) respondents provided feedback:

- *Save the money, save the stress it causes to the providers, instead let centres carry out self-assessments.*
- *We have enjoyed a positive relationship with Estyn, and we are confident that this will continue.*

We then asked:

**11. We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposals in this consultation would have on the Welsh language, specifically on: Opportunities for people to use Welsh 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 mitigated?**

4 out of 16 (25%) of respondents provided opinions.

- *I don't think it will make any difference to these particular areas at all. However, I do think it will improve provision and so benefit those who choose to improve their Welsh language skills or start from scratch to learn Welsh.*
- *We believe that what is being done by the Learning Welsh sector is leading the way in adult learning but also in learning Welsh. The service offered creates speakers and users of the Welsh language and that is vital in aiming for the million speakers.*
- *"Welsh for Adults' numbers are extremely small, so small that they are barely high enough to be considered a percentage in the census (and the numbers of those who become fluent in the language are even smaller).*
- *Within Wales, I think that the Welsh language is often treated more favourably than the English language.*

The final question was:

**We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposals in this consultation would have on issues of equality, discrimination, promotion of equality of opportunity and fostering of good relationships between different people. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?**

There was only one response provided:

- *I don't think there would be any impact at all on these issues.*

## **5. Next Steps**

The findings of the consultation will help inform the new inspection arrangements from 2024 onwards for Welsh for Adults provision.