

The Welsh Language Commissioner's response to Qualifications Wales's consultation: Design requirements for new AS and A Levels in Cymraeg and Core Cymraeg

September 2025

Below is a summary of the Commissioner's response to Qualifications Wales's [consultation](#) on new AS and A Levels in Cymraeg and Core Cymraeg. The response was originally submitted in the form of answers to a number of specific questions on an online form.

Overview

The Welsh Language Commissioner approves the proposals' aim to build on the new GCSE qualifications, which will support learners' progression. We welcome the proposals to create qualifications that will be attractive to learners across Wales. It is essential to increase the appeal of these qualifications. It is crucial that the qualifications are attractive to young people and that they feel they are relevant to them.

As stated in the consultation document, the number studying AS and A Level qualifications in Welsh has been decreasing in recent years. The document also discusses the reduction in the number of teachers who can provide these qualifications and the challenges of recruiting teachers. This is a matter of great concern, especially in the context of the objectives of the *Cymraeg 2050* strategy and the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025. There is a need to increase substantially the number of teachers who will be able to teach Welsh as a subject in the future. Without enough teachers with Welsh language skills, there will be a continuous barrier to ensuring an increase in the number of individuals who leave school able to speak Welsh and use the language. The qualifications are only one part of the picture, but we agree with the view noted in the consultation document about the role of the qualifications in supporting confident lifelong Welsh language users, progression to study the Welsh language as a higher education subject and the bilingual workforce of the future.

The skills intended for learners to develop in preparation for the qualifications are essential for the world of work. These include communicating effectively, understanding audience and context when communicating, analysing texts and listening and responding to the opinions of others. We support the intention to develop these skills. One of the aims of *Cymraeg 2050* is to increase the use of Welsh in the workplace across all sectors. This is also a priority in the Welsh Language Commissioner's Strategic Plan for 2025-2030. The challenge, in our opinion, is to maintain young people's Welsh language skills and turn speakers into long-term users. Focusing on increasing the use of Welsh in the workplace has the potential to influence people's perception of the importance of the language, on opportunities to build linguistic confidence and on wider use of the Welsh language in the community.

Purpose and aims of the qualifications

We support the intention for the qualifications to enable learners to understand the development and status of the Welsh language and the wider contexts that affect the Welsh language. We agree with the aim that the qualifications should create a foundation to enable learners to continue to study and use the language effectively and confidently in a bilingual society.

Learning contexts

We agree that the qualifications should enable learners to develop their knowledge and skills for life, learning and work, and to understand the status and use of the Welsh language in a bilingual country, including in the community, society and the workplace. There is an increasing demand for a bilingual workforce in Wales today. There are now over 130 organizations under the Welsh language standards regime, including some of the largest employers in Wales. We also know that the Welsh language is a skill valued by organizations beyond the standards regime. These include small and large businesses, some of which have received Cynnig Cymraeg recognition by the Welsh Language Commissioner. We believe that it is very important for young people to understand this significant context when studying the Welsh language and when considering their future in the world of work. The *Cymraeg 2050* strategy states that ‘young people will need to be aware of the benefits of continuing to develop their Welsh language skills in preparation for the workplace and the importance of using the language regularly to maintain fluency and confidence’.

Content

We would like to support the view that a wider variety of contexts should be included within the qualifications, to appeal to a wide range of learners and develop the knowledge and skills learners need to support further progression.

We agree that the qualifications should include a variety of texts from different periods, including contemporary texts, to widen the appeal and relevance of the qualifications to young learners. There is an opportunity here for young people to feel that the qualifications are relevant and interesting to them.

Assessment structure

We agree that the oracy assessments should give learners the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts. We support the view that this could help learners when studying the Welsh language further and when using Welsh in the world of work. In the case of the Core Cymraeg qualifications, we also agree with the view that the contexts should reflect wider goals for creating confident and independent users of the Welsh language in a variety of situations, including socially and in the world of work. We support the proposal to introduce tasks that focus on applying communication skills in real-life situations, including the workplace. We also support the aim of developing skills that can be mapped against the Common Language Descriptors that will be defined in the Welsh Government Code for describing Welsh language ability.

In the context of the Cymraeg qualifications, we agree that grammatical assessments should focus on applying practical skills relevant to the world of work and further study. We also believe that an understanding of the possibilities of using the Welsh language in different registers should be developed, for example when using social media in a personal or professional context.

We agree with the intention for the assessment objectives to support alignment with the Common Reference Levels that will be defined in the Welsh Government Code for describing Welsh language ability. The Welsh Language and Education Act imposes a requirement on the Welsh Ministers to review Welsh language standards in the context of the Welsh language skills of the workforce in order to reflect the Code. It is important therefore that the qualifications contribute to linguistic

progression by developing young people's Welsh language skills in order to enable them to increase their use of those skills when entering the world of work.