

Welsh language and bilingual lifelong learning:

a vision for the post-compulsory sector in Wales
(2020 to 2025)

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol
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Coleg
Cymraeg
Cenedlaethol

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1. Introduction

The Coleg Cymraeg's five-year [Strategic Plan](#) was launched in February 2020. The plan outlines the Coleg's vision and values for this period and outlines the strategic priorities for achieving the vision.

Since launching the Strategic Plan the Covid-19 pandemic has affected every aspect of life and public policy including the work of the Coleg Cymraeg in the post-compulsory sector.

As with many other organisations, the Coleg has had to adapt its short term plans quickly in order to support our partners to continue to offer Welsh-medium and bilingual provision of the highest quality to students and learners.

For the higher education sector this has included:

1. Extending our incentive scholarship scheme, worth £1,500 over three years, to every student choosing to study at least 40 credits through the medium of Welsh.
2. Taking a leading role working with the universities to coordinate the work of ensuring that suitable online resources are available to support Welsh-medium teaching and learning.
3. Leading on a scheme to offer training to the Welsh-medium lecturing community on new teaching methods, and in particular blended and online learning.

As we move forward we are considering what further steps are appropriate during the next period, especially as universities increasingly move towards blended learning models following experiences during the pandemic.

For the further education and apprenticeship sectors the Coleg has:

1. Collected all of the relevant resources that already exist within the Coleg as well as resources from other organisations such as colleges and individual providers, and placed them on the Coleg's new Porth Adnoddau ([Resources Portal](#)) which launched in March of this year.
2. Ensured that the virtual open days held in September (a campaign led by Welsh Government) reflected the Welsh medium and bilingual provision that is available and encourages learners to take advantage of them and develop their Welsh language skills whatever their level and launching the "Go further with Welsh" / "Mae gen ti fantais" campaign to promote the opportunities to use and study through the medium of Welsh and bilingually in the post-16 sector.
3. Remaining concerned about the lack of staff able to speak and teach through the medium of Welsh in the further education and apprenticeship sectors, the Coleg has awarded four grants this year to develop provision in four colleges and we continue to support recipients of grants awarded in 2019.

The purpose of this document is to summarise the Coleg's main plans for the medium term period by sector and outline policy and funding recommendations in the context of rebuilding a post-compulsory sector in Wales that embraces the Welsh language and bilingualism and develops a confident and bilingual workforce for the future

2. Vision

The Coleg Cymraeg's vision is that the Welsh language is an integral part of the pattern of lifelong learning for the people of Wales, and specifically in the context of post-16 and higher education.

Whilst the pandemic has changed the context entirely, and whilst every one of us has had to adapt in order to respond, our vision for the next period to increase Welsh-medium and bilingual provision across further education colleges, apprenticeships and universities, as well as address the challenges facing Welsh-medium and bilingual initial teacher training, remains strong and is outlined in this paper.

Our long-term vision is ambitious and a vital part of the Welsh Government's 2050 Welsh language strategy to create a million Welsh speakers. The Government has identified the growth of bilingual skills across the public sector, and especially in the health and care workforce, education and childcare, as priorities, and the expectations of the Welsh Language Standards across the economy mean that the demand for a bilingual workforce in Wales is on the rise.

While the Coleg's initial work focused on offering study opportunities for Welsh speakers at a higher education level, the Coleg's new responsibilities for the further education and apprenticeship sector, and the Coleg's exciting plans to attract new audiences to consider the Welsh language and bilingualism as part of their higher education studies, mean that **the Coleg's potential to contribute to the goal of creating a million people who speak and use the Welsh language by 2050 is significantly increased.**

Given the numbers of learners, trainees and students enrolling each year in the post-compulsory sector, and their direct link with the economy, employment, public services and the citizens of Wales, the Coleg believes it can make a huge difference to skills and language use within our communities. **But to succeed, we need the resources, support and co-operation of our partners and funders.**

3. Summary of the Coleg's recommendations

Further Education

Challenge: At present, only a small percentage of staff within the further education colleges speak Welsh, and even fewer are able to teach through the medium of Welsh. As a result, the number of courses available to learners through the medium of Welsh or bilingually is very limited.

Context: As part of the Welsh Government's policy to create a million people who speak and use the Welsh language by 2050, an Action Plan for Welsh-medium and bilingual Further Education and Apprenticeships was launched in January 2019. In 18 months, there has been purposeful progress in implementing the plan's short-term objectives, however, very few of the Government's medium-term ambitions relating to increasing provision can be achieved within the current funding framework.

Recommendation	The impact of accepting the recommendation	The impact of not accepting the recommendation
<p>1. For the 2020/21 financial year, an additional investment of £810,000 from the Welsh Government is needed to begin the work of recruiting new staff who can teach the priority areas through the medium of Welsh and offer support to them to develop the new provision.</p>	<p>Pilot National Teaching Scheme established in the priority areas (recruitment of up to two FTE members of staff per institution)</p> <p>A support structure in place to assist the new lecturers</p> <p>Further education colleges offering some Welsh-medium provision across some of the priority areas</p> <p>Learners beginning to benefit from developing Welsh language and bilingual skills, enabling them to use those skills in the workplace and in society</p>	<p>Very slow increase or no increase in the level of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision across our further education colleges.</p> <p>A failure to exploit goodwill within the further education sector leading to a loss of momentum.</p> <p>A failure to meet the targets set in the Action Plan.</p>
<p>2. For the next Senedd term, there should be a commitment to implement the Further Education Action Plan in its entirety over a three-year period, with the number of subjects supported increasing year-on-year in line with the Government's ambition. To deliver the vision, a three-year budget will be needed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: £1,400,000 • Year 2: £2,500,000 • Year 3: £3,200,000 	<p>Further Education Action Plan delivered over the next Senedd term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further education colleges offering Welsh-medium provision across all priority areas. • Learners benefiting from developing Welsh language and bilingual skills, enabling them to use those skills in the workplace and in society. • Further Education colleges developing a stronger Welsh language feel and culture. 	<p>Very slow increase or no increase in the level of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision across our further education colleges.</p> <p>A failure to exploit goodwill within the further education sector leading to a loss of momentum.</p> <p>A failure to meet the targets set in the Action Plan.</p>

Apprenticeships

Challenge: At present, the number of Welsh-medium and bilingual training opportunities available is very limited, mainly due to a lack of qualifications and a lack of Welsh-medium trainers and assessors.

Context: The Welsh Government is committed to creating 100,000 new apprenticeships by the end of this Senedd term, and its Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh-medium Action Plan makes a commitment to support more trainees to study bilingually. The Government does not currently set clear expectations for apprenticeship providers on their responsibilities to develop more Welsh-medium and bilingual training opportunities

Recommendation	The impact of accepting the recommendation	The impact of not accepting the recommendation
<p>3. The Government should ensure that the agreements between them and the apprenticeship providers, which will next be reviewed in 2021, make clear references to the Government's expectations in terms of targets relating to the Welsh language and bilingualism.</p>	<p>The Action Plan for Welsh-medium Apprenticeships being delivered over the next Senedd term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship providers offering Welsh-medium and bilingual provision across the priority areas 	<p>Very slow increase or no increase in the level of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision across apprenticeship providers.</p> <p>A failure to exploit goodwill within the sector – loss of momentum.</p> <p>A failure to meet the targets set in the Action Plan</p>
<p>4. For the next Senedd term, a reasonable budget should be allocated to the Coleg to ensure that national support structures are put in place. These structures would enable the Coleg to plan strategically, influence targets and implement specific projects:</p> <p>Year 1: £500,000</p> <p>Year 2: £725,000</p> <p>Year 3: £865,000</p>	<p>The Action Plan for Welsh-medium Apprenticeships being delivered over the next Senedd term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trainees benefiting from developing Welsh language and bilingual skills, enabling them to use those skills in the workplace and in society. Workplaces developing a stronger Welsh language feel and culture. 	<p>Very slow increase or no increase in the level of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision across apprenticeship providers.</p> <p>A failure to exploit goodwill within the sector – loss of momentum.</p> <p>A failure to meet the targets set in the Action Plan</p>

Higher Education

Challenge: The Coleg's core budget for the higher education sector has remained static since 2016, meaning that coping with the increasing cost of maintaining Welsh-medium provision, e.g. pay rises, pensions and inflation, has been a matter of great concern for universities. The Covid-19 pandemic has added unprecedented financial pressure on our universities.

Context: The position of the Welsh language in higher education has been transformed over the last decade and the Coleg, in collaboration with the universities, has achieved this in a challenging, competitive and changing environment. Although the position of higher education in Wales is fragile at present, leading to challenges in maintaining Welsh-medium provision at many universities in the face of cuts, there are many opportunities to attract new audiences to Welsh-medium and bilingual higher education.

Recommendation	The impact of accepting the recommendation	The impact of not accepting the recommendation
<p>5. The Coleg's core grant for higher education should be increased equivalent to an inflationary increase since 2011 in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the provision already being funded; • Expand the provision; • Attract new audiences. <p><i>(The increase could be funded from a variety of sources including the Welsh Government's core budget for higher education, any post-Covid-19 recovery fund or from any dividend that comes in the future as a result of the recommendations of the Diamond report.)</i></p>	<p>Maintaining and consolidating the current Welsh medium provision.</p> <p>Increased opportunities within existing models including strengthening joint working between institutions as blended learning is introduced.</p> <p>Increased provision in foundation degrees, apprenticeship degrees, part-time degrees and postgraduate degrees, as well as support for a limited number of areas where it is not currently possible to study in Welsh.</p> <p>Increased provision specifically tailored for students who are less confident in their Welsh language skills.</p> <p>Widened access and new audiences being attracted to Welsh in higher education</p>	<p>Welsh-medium provision in higher education making no gains, and shrinking in a number of areas.</p> <p>Welsh medium provision within higher education only available to fluent and confident Welsh speaking students.</p>

Training a sufficient supply of teachers with Welsh and bilingual skills

Challenge: At present, it is inevitable that the current targets for increasing the number of teachers who teach through the medium of Welsh will not be reached, including those teaching Welsh as a subject in the secondary sector.

Context: Ensuring a sufficient supply of Welsh-medium teachers, lecturers and trainers will be vital to the success of Cymraeg 2050. The Coleg has no planning role in this area.

Recommendation	The impact of accepting the recommendation	The impact of not accepting the recommendation
<p>6. A close strategic relationship should be established between the Coleg and the Education Workforce Council (EWC) in order to put national arrangements in place to train teachers with Welsh language and bilingual skills.</p> <p>In the first instance, the Coleg would need additional funding of £200,000 per annum to undertake such a role. This would enable the Coleg to work with the providers to support them to them and secure budget to share good practice and train/develop staff.</p>	<p>An experienced national body with specific responsibilities working with the EWC to lead on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating targets for training a sufficient number of qualified teachers; • working with partners to ensure sufficient high-quality provision; • working with partners to ensure that sufficient numbers are enrolled to train as teachers in the Welsh-medium sector. 	<p>Welsh Government failing to supply enough Welsh language and bilingual teachers and failing to meet the growing demand for qualified teachers created by the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs).</p>

Developing a bilingual NHS workforce

Challenge: Health Boards across Wales currently report that recruiting a bilingual workforce is a significant challenge.

Context: The Welsh Government has set out a clear vision in its [More Than Just Words strategy](#) for providing health and care services to the people of Wales in their language of choice. Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) is the body responsible for planning and developing the NHS workforce in Wales.

Recommendation	The impact of accepting the recommendation	The impact of not accepting the recommendation
<p>7. A close strategic relationship should be established between HEIW and the Coleg Cymraeg in order to agree suitable targets and goals and develop bespoke plans to increase the Welsh language and bilingual skills of the health service workforce in Wales.</p>	<p>The Welsh Government and health boards making significant progress towards meeting the aims of the More Than Just Words strategy.</p> <p>Health boards reporting that recruiting a bilingual workforce is less of a challenge than was previously the case.</p> <p>The people of Wales more likely to be able to communicate effectively with care providers, leading to better quality of care.</p>	<p>Very slow or no progress in achieving the aims of the More Than Just Words strategy.</p> <p>Health boards continuing to report that recruiting a bilingual workforce is a significant challenge.</p> <p>The people of Wales continuing to have difficulty accessing health and care services through the medium of Welsh, meaning the quality of care suffers.</p>

Working together across the post-compulsory sector

Challenge: Ensure that the entire post-compulsory sector commits to working with the Coleg in an effective and strategic way to support the aim of increasing Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.

Context: The proposed changes to the post-compulsory sector in Wales and the current Government's plans to establish a new Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) presents an opportunity to achieve this.

Recommendation	The impact of accepting the recommendation	The impact of not accepting the recommendation
<p>8. A close and strategic relationship should be established between the Coleg and any new body in order to facilitate effective collaboration across the post-compulsory sector in Wales and increase Welsh-medium provision.</p>	<p>The entire post-compulsory sector working together to achieve the aims of the Cymraeg 2050 strategy.</p> <p>Progression pathways created which encourage learners, trainees and students to continue with their Welsh language studies and to use their Welsh language skills in the workplace.</p>	<p>Lack of cooperation within the sector slows progress in terms of increasing Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.</p>

4. In focus: the post-16 sectors and higher education

a. Welsh-medium and bilingual further education

i. Vision

The Coleg's vision for the further education sector is to ensure that the Welsh language is accessible to all.

To achieve this, a skills development model should be utilised, to increase levels of awareness, understanding, confidence and fluency, which will lead to the upskilling of everyone in the sector. To achieve this, we need to ensure:

- an increase in the level of support for learners to use and develop their Welsh language skills;
- sufficient staffing capacity at a range of linguistic levels to support apprentices;
- bilingual and Welsh-medium provision being developed in colleges across the country; and
- sufficient resources and qualifications being available to support this learning through the medium of Welsh.

Employers also have a key role in identifying and creating the demand for Welsh language skills in workplaces.

ii. Context

Since the Education Minister launched the [Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh-medium Plan](#) in January 2019, the Coleg has worked effectively with its partners and laid firm foundations to deliver on the Government's commitment to increase Welsh-medium and bilingual provision in those sectors.

During the last 18 months, at the level of planning and developing a support structure, the Coleg has undertaken purposeful work and has seen promising progress:

- We have published new resources to support Welsh-medium learning in health and care as well as language awareness resources that will be used by all apprentices reaching B3 in their learning activity.
- We have awarded six grants worth over £250,000 to develop provision in health and care, childcare and public services.
- We have launched an ambassadors' scheme across Wales for the further education and apprenticeships sector.
- We have developed effective relationships with key partners to implement specific elements of the Action Plan;
- We have identified important budgets that are already being used to support important themes within the action plan and have agreed with the bodies that hold those budgets how they could be used strategically, e.g. Qualifications Wales and the National Centre for Learning Welsh;
- We have worked with the National Centre for Learning Welsh to launch Apprenticeship Work Welsh, and continue to subcontract the Further Education Work Welsh scheme to ColegauCymru to coordinate on our behalf. Rydym wedi gweithio gyda'r Ganolfan Dysgu Cymraeg er mwyn lansio Cymraeg Gwaith Prentisiaethau ac yn parhau i isgontractio'r cynllun Cymraeg Gwaith Addysg Bellach i GolegauCymru, er mwyn i GolegauCymru ei gydlynu ar ein rhan.

The impact of Covid-19 on Welsh language and bilingual provision has caused us concern – it is possible that the small steps already undertaken could be undermined by the changes brought about in light of the pandemic. We have been trying to mitigate these risks by working with the funded projects in order to bring together provision across Wales in a more strategic and coherent way to maximise impact on learners across the country to create bilingual blended learning provision for health and social care, childcare and public services.

However, despite the progress outlined above, and in light of concerns surrounding the pandemic, delivering on the plans set out in the Further Education and Apprenticeship Action Plan requires a detailed consideration and prioritisation of the resources required.

One of the key aspects highlighted by further education institutions (FEIs) and apprenticeship providers is the lack of staff who are able to teach in Welsh. This is confirmed by EWC data collated as part of a Welsh Government project.

The data shows that only 15% of lecturers speak Welsh – with only 11% reporting that they can teach through the medium of Welsh.¹ The data also identifies the situation in relation to specific subjects. In the three priority subjects, the numbers who speak Welsh are generally slightly higher (but lowest in Health and Care). Furthermore, the pattern across the further education institutions varies considerably by location and by subject. Note that only two colleges across Wales have capacity in the three priority areas. Furthermore, statistics recently released by the Welsh Government show that, in 2018/19, only 9% of learning activities in the further education sector were through the medium of Welsh and/or included bilingual elements.²

1 <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/cy/ystadegau-ac-ymchwil/ystadegau-r-gweithlu-addysg.html> t.26.

2 <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2020-02/further-education-work-based-learning-and-community-learning-august-2018-july-2019-031.pdf>

iii. Priorities and recommendations

Short term plans (2020/21)

Our experience in higher education has shown that there is an urgent need to start undertaking deliberate planning and appropriate investment by subject in order to address the current lack of provision. The plan needs to be flexible and pragmatic enough to address the needs and priorities of the different institutions or providers.

For 2020/21, we have identified three existing budgets to support specific aspects of the Plan's next period: the Qualifications Wales budget for translating further education and apprenticeship qualifications into Welsh (£180,000) and staff training budget (c. £200,000). The Coleg – in partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh – has also secured a commitment to fund language training for staff in the further education sector worth up to £300,000 over the coming year. The Coleg is already working with the Government and its partners to ensure that the three budgets are allocated in accordance with the Plan's priorities.

In order to address the current lack of provision, it is suggested that action be taken at two levels:

- In order to increase the number of staff teaching through the medium of Welsh across the priority subjects areas and to ensure that FEIs can deliver provision in all three subject areas a pilot bilingual teaching scheme is proposed with a budget to appoint up to 2 FTE lecturers in each FEI (in accordance with the findings of the mapping exercise and FEI priorities). We will work closely with each FEI to understand their needs and priorities to appoint up to 2 FTE lecturers and also hold discussions around whether a shared resource would be appropriate. As the FE and Apprenticeships action plan targets all learners to develop their Welsh language skills, staff capacity needs to increase drastically in order to deliver this vision.
- In order to support the newly appointed lecturers in the FEIs it is recommended that there is a need for a Curriculum Development Officer in order to work with the individual lecturers as well as the creation of an online system to support with the development of new provision in the FEIs and enhance the learner experience. The aim will be to provide hands on support to around 25 existing and newly appointed lecturers as part of this subject pilot.

The cost of funding both schemes for the 2020/21 financial year would be as follows:

Priorities	Additional budget
Pilot National Teaching Scheme in the priority areas (up to two FTE members of staff per institution)	£750,000
Creation of a support structure for the newly appointed lecturers in the FEI's:	
• Curriculum Development Officer	£35,000
• Online support to develop provision	£25,000
	£810,000

Recommendation 1: For the financial year 2020/21, an additional Welsh Government investment of £810,000 is needed to begin the work of recruiting new staff who can teach the priority areas through the medium of Welsh and putting support structures in place to support them to develop new provision.

Medium term plans (2021/22 and beyond)

- Health and care
- Childcare
- Public services, such as the police and fire service
- Sports
- Performing arts
- Business
- Construction
- Agriculture

Following a pilot year in 2020/21 as outlined above, it is suggested that we should proceed with extending Welsh-medium provision within our colleges in 2021/22 and beyond with a focus on the priority areas. In order to make holistic and sustainable progress, in line with the Action Plan, national support structures will also need to be put in place. This will mean the Coleg will be able to offer educators support and coordinate planning work, including:

- Establishing subject forums
- Organising progression activities
- Creating Welsh language resources based on the recommendations of the subject specialists
- Organising Industry Dialogue events
- Employing Development Officers in training, curriculum and marketing

In order to create a Welsh language culture and community within the further education colleges and ensure sustainable growth in the professional and social use of Welsh in our communities, clear emphasis is also needed on supporting a bilingual environment and ethos in the further education institutions and the workplace. This element of the strategy is as important as increasing the staffing levels. In terms of creating a Welsh language ethos and culture, our ambition by 2025/26 is that every college will have:

- A branch officer;
- A programme of language promotion activities;
- At least three ambassadors.

By taking a holistic and sustainable approach to the work of planning the enrichment of provision, we can be sure that the plan will have the maximum impact.

To deliver the vision, a three-year budget will be needed as follows:

Year	Budget
Year 1 (2021/22)	£1,400,000
Year 2 (2022/23)	£2,500,000
Year 3 (2023/24)	£3,200,000

Recommendation 2: For the next Senedd term, there should be a commitment to implement the Action Plan in its entirety over a three-year period, with the number of subjects supported increasing year-on-year in line with the Government’s ambition. To deliver the vision, a three-year budget will be needed as follows: Year 1: £1,400,000, Year 2: £2,500,000, Year 3: £3,200,000

b. Welsh-medium and bilingual apprenticeships

i. Vision

The Coleg’s vision for the apprenticeship sector is to ensure that the Welsh language is accessible to all.

To achieve this, a similar skills development model should be utilised to the one outlined above for the further education sector, to increase the level of awareness, understanding, confidence and fluency of everyone in the sector. To achieve this, we need to ensure:

- an increase in the level of support for apprentices to use and develop their Welsh language skills;
- sufficient staffing capacity at a range of linguistic levels to support apprentices;
- Welsh-medium and bilingual apprenticeships being developed across the country; and
- sufficient resources and qualifications being available to support this learning through the medium of Welsh.

There is also a key role for employers in this area, specifically in identifying and creating the demand for Welsh language skills in workplaces and providing support in mentoring apprentices in the workplace.

ii. Context

In terms of the workforce, in the apprenticeship sector only 10% report being able to speak Welsh and only 7% can teach through the medium of Welsh.³ Statistics recently released by the Welsh Government also show that, in 2018/19, only 12% of learning activities relating to work-based learning were provided through the medium of Welsh and/or included bilingual elements.⁴ These low percentages highlight the work to be done in this sector to deliver the aim of increasing Welsh language training opportunities.

The Coleg is already working in partnership with NTfW and Qualifications Wales to ensure that more qualifications and assessments are available bilingually. Qualifications Wales has a policy which states that all approved qualifications are expected to be available in Welsh. However, this expectation does not include a significant number of qualifications currently offered in the post-16 sector

iii. Coleg priorities and recommendations

In collaboration with Qualifications Wales and the apprenticeship providers, the Coleg is undertaking a formal mapping exercise so that it is in a position to identify the priorities that need to be addressed. The results of the mapping exercise will inform the funding decisions of Qualifications Wales and the Coleg in translating qualifications into Welsh using the £180,000 budget that Qualifications Wales has for this purpose for 2020/21. We will ensure that the apprenticeship sector budget for co-ordination and promotion (c. £50,000) is aligned with the Action Plan. The Coleg – in partnership with the National Centre for Learning Welsh – has also secured a commitment to fund language training worth up to £100,000 over the coming year.

3 <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/cy/ystadegau-ac-ymchwil/ystadegau-r-gweithlu-addysg.html> t.26.

4 <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/statistics-and-research/2020-02/further-education-work-based-learning-and-community-learning-august-2018-july-2019-031.pdf>

Beyond the activities outlined above, the Coleg believes that the most effective way of meaningfully increasing Welsh-medium provision in the apprenticeship sector in Wales is to ensure that the agreements between the Welsh Government and apprenticeship providers, to be next reviewed in 2021, make clear reference to the Government's expectations in terms of the Welsh language. As part of the contractual process, specific targets could be set for the number of Welsh-medium and bilingual apprenticeships – varying the targets according to employment area and apprentice skills. This would ensure that there are clear benefits for providers of developing provision, and that there are funding implications for the provider if no progress is made. Such an arrangement would also lead to purposeful work to support apprentices to pursue their qualifications through the medium of Welsh, to ensure that sufficient numbers of tutors and assessors are available and to ensure that bilingual qualifications are available across a wide range of areas.

Recommendation 3: The Government should ensure that the agreements between them and the apprenticeship providers, which will next be reviewed in 2021, make clear references to the Government's expectations in terms of the Welsh language.

With clear guidance from the Government at a contractual level, we outline below a relatively small budget for the Coleg Cymraeg to ensure that national support structures are in place and that specific bilingual resources are developed to support the apprentice and provider:

Year	Budget
Year 1 (2021/22)	£500,000
Year 2 (2022/23)	£725,000
Year 3 (2023/24)	£865,000

Such a budget would enable the Coleg to:

- plan strategically;
- influence Welsh-medium / bilingual targets in the apprenticeship sector;
- provide a structure to support this (development officers at the Coleg);
- implement specific projects such as ambassadors, employer champions, grants to support formal and informal activities, language promotion campaigns, employer engagement, resources to support the curriculum and subject forums.

Recommendation 4: A reasonable budget should also be allocated to the Coleg to ensure that national support structures are put in place: Year 1: £500,000, Year 2: £725,000 and Year 3: £865,000

c. Welsh in higher education

i. Vision

The Coleg's Academic Plan for higher education is based on the principle that 'every student has the right to first-rate Welsh-medium higher education'.⁵ The Coleg aims to work with the universities to increase the study opportunities for students who wish to pursue a part of their degree studies through the medium of Welsh.

The Coleg's early years saw a focus on developing academic capacity and creating new lecturing posts, and the work to extend provision across as wide a range of subjects as possible continues. The Coleg's academic planning work for 2020 and beyond focuses on:

- Student experience – that Welsh-medium students receive a first-class educational experience;
- Lecturers – that there is a suitable number of lecturers to maintain the provision and to offer as wide a range of subjects as possible through the medium of Welsh;
- Curriculum – that academic provision for students is provided in a cost-effective manner in as many disciplines as possible;
- Student Outcomes – that Welsh-medium students achieve their full potential in terms of their achievement rates and success in gaining employment at the end of their studies or progressing to postgraduate study;
- Resources – that the teaching of students is enhanced through the development of high-quality resources;
- Employability – that workforce development needs in Wales are identified and contribute to the planning and development of provision;
- Sustainability – that as many students as possible benefit from Welsh-medium higher education provision.

ii. Context

Since the Coleg was established in 2011, the position of the Welsh language in higher education has been transformed: there has been a significant increase at the universities in Welsh-medium provision, the choice offered to students and the number of students choosing to study some of their course through the medium of Welsh.

Over the last decade, the breadth of Welsh-medium provision at our universities has increased significantly and there are now around 1,000 courses available to study through the medium of Welsh. There is also now a robust community of Welsh-medium lecturers and educators working in our universities across Wales. Coleg membership was open from the start, and, building on the success of the Academic Staffing Scheme, the Associate Lecturers scheme was launched in 2018. With over 300 members already, the scheme enables everyone who teaches through the medium of Welsh at a university to be an associate lecturer of the Coleg.

As a result of the significant developments in the provision and the increase in the number of lecturers and teachers, there has been an increase of over 2,000 in the number of full-time students studying at least a part of their course through the medium of Welsh since the Coleg was established, and an increase of around 400 in the numbers studying at least a third of their course in Welsh.

The Coleg, in collaboration with the universities, has achieved a great deal in a challenging, competitive and changing environment, and until recently has coped well with reduced resources as well as rapid technological advances and changes in the political climate.

However, the current period is financially very challenging for our universities, with particular concern surrounding the pattern of student choices over the next few years. The fact that a significant number chooses to study outside Wales is also a challenge. Many of our higher education institutions have had to make cuts, implement restructures and make a number of staff redundant in recent years and the Covid-19 pandemic has intensified these challenges further.

At the same time, the Coleg's core budget for the higher education sector has remained static since 2016, meaning that coping with the increasing cost of maintaining Welsh-medium provision, e.g. pay rises, pensions and inflation, has been a matter of great concern for universities.

There is no doubt that Welsh-medium study opportunities for students would have shrunk over the last five years without the Coleg's budget, support and guidance. But there is no guarantee that a continuing static budget will be sufficient to protect existing provision from cuts.

Nevertheless, the Coleg continues to plan ambitiously for the future, and has agreed a model with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) whereby all higher education providers will be expected in their Fee and Access Plans to aim to ensure that a certain percentage of their Welsh-medium students are studying part of their courses through the medium of Welsh. In the context noted, this model is a suitable way of setting targets and measuring the success of universities in meeting those targets.

iii. Coleg priorities and recommendations

The challenges outlined above will continue, and as a result of Covid-19 will intensify, over the next period. It is therefore vital that, during challenging economic times, the Coleg works flexibly and creatively to ensure the best use of its existing budget and to ensure that the Welsh language continues to be a language of study for an increasing number of students.

Over the next period, the Coleg's aims are to:

- Maintain the provision already being funded;
- Build on the progress seen by deepening and extending provision where appropriate;
- Develop new initiatives to widen access and attracting new audiences to the Welsh language in higher education.

Maintain the provision already being funded

As noted above, whilst the cost of maintaining Welsh medium provision in universities has increased as a result of an increase in lecturers' pay, pensions and inflation, the Coleg's grant has not increased since 2016.

Over the years, the universities have become increasingly reliant on the Coleg's funding to maintain their Welsh-medium provision, and even the subjects with a strong tradition of teaching through the medium of Welsh are experiencing a squeeze, and are less sustainable without the Coleg's support.

Increasing the Coleg's core grant for higher education would enable the Coleg to offer more support to departments already providing through the medium of Welsh in order to ensure that Welsh-medium lecturers' time is protected for the purpose of teaching through the medium of Welsh and that there is no reduction in current provision.

Increasing opportunities within existing models

By 2020, the Subject Grants scheme, which replaces the previous Staffing Scheme, will have reached capacity in terms of the core budget currently provided to the Coleg.

The Coleg is attempting to continue to increase the breadth of subjects available for study in Welsh, and this year has ventured into some new areas by providing relatively small Catalyst Grants for some subjects or universities where there had previously been no Welsh-medium provision, e.g. Dentistry and Veterinary Science. This scheme has been successful, but with the funding available, there is no guarantee that it will be possible to continue offering ongoing support to these departments, or to extend the breadth of provision further before the commitments exceed the budget.

With a modest budget increase, it would be possible to:

- Support universities already in receipt of a Subject Grant to reach and exceed their targets. Some universities are keen to deepen the study experience available to students by doubling the number of credits available through the medium of Welsh (i.e. increasing from 40 credits per year to 80 credits), while all are keen to increase the number of students

enrolling on the provision.

- Ensure that developments in blended learning in the face of Covid-19 include Welsh-medium and bilingual provision and that this is mainstreamed. This development offers significant opportunities to promote cooperative activity and sharing expertise.
- Increase the number of subjects that include an element of Welsh-medium teaching, e.g. healthcare subjects such as Optometry, Radiography and Occupational Health as well as Architecture, Town and Country Planning, and Educational Psychology.
- Increase the number of subject-specific placements, in order to give students a real choice. This would only be appropriate if student numbers allowed.

Widening access and attracting new audiences

The Coleg's current funding models focus on full-time undergraduate provision, and support departments that offer students 'substantial' study opportunities (i.e. where at least a third or two thirds of the degree scheme can be studied through the medium of Welsh).

However, with a reasonable budget increase, there are many opportunities to extend provision beyond those limits, widening access to the Welsh language and seeking to appeal to new audiences including:

- Deepening the mode of study, and ensuring Welsh-medium growth in postgraduate provision, post-qualifying provision, foundation degrees, 'access to higher education' provision, higher education in further education provision, work-based provision, continuing professional development, etc;
- Maintaining the language skills of students who do not have the opportunity or do not choose to study a third or more of their degree course through the medium of Welsh. This may include offering provision of between 10 and 30 credits a year, which would enable students to use their Welsh at higher education level, build their confidence and maintain and develop their bilingual skills. The data shows that there is a significant potential pool of students at Welsh universities who lack confidence in their language skills, and/or describe themselves as 'not fluent'. While fluent speakers are most likely to enrol on Welsh-medium modules, there are about twice as many non-fluent students. By planning dedicated provision for this audience, we could improve their language skills and give them the confidence and language tools needed to join the bilingual workforce.

The Coleg has supported an experimental scheme at the University of South Wales this year to provide employability modules that combine language skills and workplace skills training, and contribute to the effort to create a bilingual professional workforce and achieve one of the key aims of the Million Welsh Speakers strategy. With an appropriate budget, this scheme could be replicated across all universities, in order to ensure that all students, whatever the degree course, have the opportunity to study through the medium of Welsh while at university.

- By emulating the pyramid model of the post-16 sector, additional funding for the HE sector could also be used to create bespoke provision for non-Welsh speaking students, such as language awareness modules, Welsh for beginners, etc. This would also contribute significantly to the aims and objectives of the Million Welsh Speakers strategy.

Recommendation 5: The Coleg's core grant for higher education should be increased equivalent to an inflationary increase since 2011. The increase could be funded from a variety of sources including the Welsh Government's core budget for higher education, any post-Covid-19 recovery fund or from any dividend that comes in the future as a result of the recommendations of the Diamond report.

d. Training a sufficient supply of teachers with Welsh and bilingual skills

Ensuring a sufficient supply of Welsh-medium teachers, lecturers and trainers will be vital to the success of the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 strategy. At present, the Coleg believes it is inevitable that the current targets for increasing the number of teachers who teach through the medium of Welsh will not be reached, including those teaching Welsh as a subject in the secondary sector.

The Welsh language Commissioner published a [briefing note](#) in August of this year regarding the challenges in the field of training Welsh-medium and bilingual teachers and the Coleg shares a number of the concerns outlined in the paper.

It appears that various activities are underway to try to address the challenges, but from discussions with stakeholders it is not clear that long-term planning based on data is taking place in a strategic enough way at the moment. The Coleg believes that dedicated funding is needed, as well as an organisation with specific responsibility to work with the Education Workforce Council (EWC) as it carries out its statutory duties, to ensure that enough teachers are trained in Wales to meet the Welsh-medium needs of the primary and secondary school sector, and that the Coleg should take responsibility for this. It no longer makes sense that this is the only area of higher education where the Coleg has no role in planning and supporting provision.

With a dedicated budget and specific responsibilities, the Coleg believes that it can make a significant difference in the field of teacher training by driving better collaboration between various bodies (as has already been demonstrated in further education and apprenticeships) and securing more value for money for the Welsh Government.

Recommendation 6: A close strategic relationship should be established between the Coleg and the EWC in order to put national arrangements in place to train teachers with Welsh language and bilingual skills. The Coleg will need a specific additional budget of £200,000 to undertake such a role. In addition, we would envisage some existing budgets being transferred to the Coleg.

e. Developing a bilingual NHS workforce

The Welsh Government has set out a clear vision in its More Than Just Words strategy for providing quality health and care services to the people of Wales – in practice, this means that a patient will be able to communicate in Welsh or English with relevant health and care practitioners. This is proving to be a difficulty for Health Boards across Wales, who report that recruiting a bilingual workforce is a significant challenge.

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) is the body responsible for planning and developing the NHS workforce in Wales, and it has a substantial budget for this purpose.

The Coleg believes that a strategic relationship should be established between the Coleg and HEIW to agree suitable targets and goals and to develop bespoke plans. This would be consistent with the Health and Care Workforce Strategy by HEIW and Social Care Wales published by the government in 2020.

A comprehensive implementation plan is needed to develop a confidently bilingual workforce for the health and care sectors in Wales. Such a plan will require detailed work and discussion, but will need to include the following features to bring about the change the Government wishes to see:

- Language awareness as a core part of the training of all prospective health and care practitioners in Wales;
- Clear targets for the number of trainees enrolling on Welsh-medium provision across all health courses each year.

The strategy's aims must be reflected in the course-commissioning process, and a percentage of the budget will need to be earmarked for training a bilingual workforce.

Recommendation 7: A close strategic relationship should be established between HEIW and the Coleg Cymraeg in order to agree suitable targets and goals and develop dedicated plans.

f. Collaborating effectively across the post-compulsory sector to increase Welsh-medium and bilingual provision

The proposed changes to the post-compulsory sector in Wales and the current Government's plans to establish a new Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) present an opportunity to ensure that the entire sector commits to working with the Coleg in an effective and strategic way to support the aim of increasing Welsh-medium provision. It is essential that any new body is established in a way that will ensure the Welsh language is central to its aims and values and that the language is mainstreamed across the organisation's activities.

The Coleg commits to working effectively with any new body in order to agree appropriate aims and targets for educational institutions and providers.

Recommendation 8: A close and strategic relationship should be established between the Coleg and any new organisation in order to facilitate effective collaboration across the post-compulsory sector in Wales and increase Welsh-medium provision

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