# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **14-16 curriculum offer and qualifications** |
| **DATE**  | **20 March 2023** |
| **BY** | **Jeremy Miles, Minister for Education and Welsh Language** |

From September this year, all schools will be teaching the Curriculum for Wales. And from 2026, all learners in our schools will be learning under the new curriculum.

We want a Welsh education system that supports all children and young people through their individual pathways to achieve their aspirations as they progress towards the Four Purposes. Whatever their next step in education or employment, the Curriculum for Wales is designed to ensure learners leave compulsory education with the knowledge, skills and experiences they need to succeed; and for their achievements and progression to be recognised.

Qualifications are a crucial element of this. Qualifications Wales are reforming the entire 14-16 year old qualifications landscape. A consultation was held in Autumn 2022 on reformed GCSEs, made in Wales, to align with the new curriculum. On Tuesday 14 March, Qualifications Wales launched a consultation on the [Full 14-16 Qualifications Offer](https://haveyoursay.qualifications.wales/hub-page/the-full-14-16-offer) – including Skills, Pre-vocational, and Foundation-level qualifications – designed to enable a more comprehensive, cohesive offer for young people in Wales.

As we reform qualifications, I am keen to ensure that all learners reach their potential in literacy and numeracy through the most suitable qualifications in Welsh, English and Maths. We expect schools’ wider curriculum offer to continue to provide learners with a good choice of courses and qualifications from across the six Areas of Learning and Experience, as well as opportunities for learners to obtain qualifications that demonstrate their wider skills and experiences. This will build on existing good practice in schools under the Welsh Baccalaureate, and the Welsh Government will work with Qualifications Wales on its evolution under the Curriculum for Wales.

14–16-year-old learners under the Curriculum for Wales will also continue to benefit from those mandatory parts of the curriculum that do not necessarily lead to qualifications, but which contribute to their development, success and onward progression. This includes relationships and sexuality education; religion, values and ethics; mandatory cross-curricular skills; and continuing learning in each Area of Learning and Experience. We must also recognise wider experiences that contribute to a learner achieving the four purposes.

As learners approach year 10, schools will continue to play a vital role in helping young people to identify their goals and aspirations so that they can progress along their chosen pathway: choices about qualifications and courses will be an important part of this. They must be supported by high quality careers and work-related learning and experiences, a mandatory part of the new curriculum, which offers a critical opportunity to build relationships across schools, further education and employers, to help young people to move confidently to their next step.

As we move forward, we will work with schools to support them in achieving this vision for learners through their curriculum offer at 14-16, including qualifications, to help provide learners with a seamless transition into the next stage of their education, employment or training. We will also put our commitment to the importance of individual learning journeys, underpinned by learners’ wider skills, experiences and achievements, at the centre, as we develop a new school improvement and information landscape.