

# ***Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care***

Phase 2 Sector Review

July 2022



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## Chapter 1: Introduction and executive summary

In this chapter, we introduce the Review and summarise the findings.

- 1.1** Welcome to our review of the agriculture, horticulture and animal care sector. This is the second in a series of phase 2 sector reviews. Phase 2 sector reviews are shorter and more focused than our original sector reviews.
- 1.2** The Review focuses on level 1, 2 and 3 qualifications that are eligible for use on publicly funded programmes of learning for learners over the age of 16 and regulated by Qualifications Wales. These are specifically qualifications taken in further education colleges, sixth form secondary schools and work-based learning providers.
- 1.3** In phase 2 sector reviews, we consider whether:
- the range of qualifications available in the sector is appropriate to meet the needs of learners, learning providers and employers; and
  - the availability of Welsh-medium qualifications is sufficient to meet the needs of learners, learning providers and employers.
- 1.4** The report is structured as follows:
- **Sector overview** – we present data on agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications offered in Wales.
  - **Methodology** – we outline how we conducted the Review.
  - **Findings** – we outline the findings of the Review, and the actions we have taken, in relation to the:
    - overall range of qualifications;
    - availability of Welsh-medium qualifications;
    - content and currency of qualifications; and
    - the assessment of qualifications.
- 1.5** In relation to the **overall range of qualifications** in agriculture, horticulture and animal care, the Review identified that:
- although there are policy changes to vocational qualifications happening in England, awarding bodies confirmed their desire to continue offering a range of agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications in Wales.

- most learning providers considered the current range of qualifications to be sufficient to meet the needs of their learners and their centre, but they expressed concerns that some qualifications were no longer available for learners in Wales.
- the Pearson BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Agriculture qualification was no longer available for learners in Wales, and some secondary schools reported that there was no suitable alternative qualification available for pre-16 learners.
- some employers and learning providers identified demand for the level 1 qualifications offered by the British Horse Society Qualifications (BHSQ) to be designated in Wales.
- several learning providers would welcome a level 1 qualification in pet services to support learners to progress to higher-level qualifications in the subject.
- work-based learning providers expressed a desire for a non-supervisory pathway to be included in the qualifications on the Horticulture and Sustainable Resource Management level 3 apprenticeship frameworks.

**1.6** In relation to the **availability of Welsh-medium qualifications** in agriculture, horticulture and animal care, the Review identified that:

- agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications were offered through the medium of Welsh across a range of learning providers, and the importance of a suitable range of Welsh-medium qualifications continuing to be available was emphasised by stakeholders throughout the Review.
- the City & Guilds Level 3 Advanced Technical in Agriculture and the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Animal Management were not available through the medium of Welsh despite demand from further education colleges.
- CIWM (WAMITAB) qualifications on the Sustainable Resource Management apprenticeship frameworks were not available through the medium of Welsh even though they are used by one large, pan-Wales centre that translate specifications and assessments to be able to offer the qualifications in Welsh.

**1.7** In relation to the **content and currency of qualifications**, the Review identified that:

- learning providers considered the content of most agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications to be up-to-date, but some agriculture

qualifications would benefit from the inclusion of content on environmental conservation and the Sustainable Farming Scheme<sup>1</sup>.

- CIWM (WAMITAB) qualifications, that are part of the Sustainable Resource Management apprenticeship frameworks, would benefit from the inclusion of additional optional units about alternative recycling methods.
- work-based learning providers suggested that additional content on animal biology could be included in the City & Guilds Level 1 in Work-based Animal Care qualification.

**1.8** In relation to the **assessment of qualifications** in agriculture, horticulture and animal care, the Review identified that:

- most learning providers consider the amount of assessment in agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications to be appropriate and manageable.
- further education colleges consider the synoptic testing used by City & Guilds to be a robust method of assessment, although it can be difficult to manage with large cohorts of learners.
- the time period allowed for the City & Guilds animal care synoptic test can create challenges for learning providers and needs to be carefully scheduled to ensure the welfare of animals that are required for the assessments.

## Our response to the findings of the Review

**1.9** Throughout the report we have set out the actions that we have already taken to address the issues raised by the Review.

<b>Actions we have taken</b>	
<b>1</b>	We shared with awarding bodies all concerns from stakeholders about qualifications that were no longer designated or soon to expire. We strongly encouraged the relevant awarding bodies to extend the designation of the affected qualifications. In response to our discussions, the relevant qualifications identified by the Review have now been extended. For example, we met with Pearson and shared with them the concerns from sixth form secondary schools that the BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Agriculture qualification had expired. We encouraged Pearson to extend the designation typical final start date which they have done until December 2024 while they work on an alternative offer.

<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government Sustainable Farming Scheme rewards farmers and land managers for the work they do to meet the challenges of the climate and nature emergencies alongside the sustainable production of food.

2	We met with BHSQ awarding body to share our findings about the demand from employers and learning providers for the Level 1 Certificate in BHS Riding Horses and the Level 1 Certificate in BHS Horse Knowledge and Care qualifications to be designated in Wales. Representatives from BHSQ told us that they intend to engage with learning providers in summer 2022 to explore the demand for these qualifications in Wales and, if demand is identified, submit them for designation.
3	We have shared with Welsh Government the findings relating to the demand from work-based learning providers for non-supervisory pathways on level 3 apprenticeship frameworks.
4	We met with iPet and Lantra Awards and shared with them our findings that centres would welcome a level 1 dog grooming qualification or additional dog grooming units within the level 1 animal care qualifications to support learners' progression to higher-level qualifications. iPet have indicated that they will explore developing a level 1 qualification in December 2022 and Lantra are currently engaging with centres to explore the demand for a level 1 qualification in this subject.
5	We shared with City & Guilds the findings relating to the availability of the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Agriculture qualification through the medium of Welsh. City & Guilds have responded positively to the request, and we have grant funded City & Guilds to make the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Agriculture qualification available through the medium of Welsh, for the learner cohorts starting in 2021/22 and 2022/23, while we collaborate with them on the development of an appropriate bilingual level 3 agriculture qualification.
6	We shared with City & Guilds the findings relating to the need for the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Animal Management qualifications to be available through the medium of Welsh. City & Guilds are currently engaging with centres to assess the demand for the Level 3 in Animal Management and other related qualifications through the medium of Welsh. We are working with City & Guilds to expand the appropriate bilingual offer to include a level 3 animal care qualification.

7	We shared with CIWM (WAMITAB) the findings relating to the availability of their qualifications through the medium of Welsh. In response to our discussions, they have successfully applied for our Welsh Language Support Grant to make available the Level 2 Diploma for Sustainable Recycling Activities and Level 3 Diploma for Sustainable Recycling Activities (Supervisory) qualifications through the medium of Welsh. CIWM (WAMITAB) have indicated that these qualifications will be available through the medium of Welsh.
8	We have met with the other awarding bodies offering agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications and reminded them of the availability of our Welsh Language Support Grant. We encouraged them to apply for the grant to make available suitable Welsh-medium qualifications in the sector. Responses from awarding bodies were positive. For example, Pearson have applied to make their new BTEC Level 1/Level 2 Tech Award in Animal Care qualification available through the medium of Welsh.
9	We shared the findings with CIWM (WAMITAB) regarding additional optional units and encouraged them to explore the demand with the work-based learning provider who shared the feedback with us. CIWM (WAMITAB) told us that they will address the need for additional content as part of the review of their level 2 and level 3 Sustainable Recycling Activities qualifications scheduled to be undertaken in autumn 2022.
10	We shared with City & Guilds the request from work-based learning providers for additional content on animal biology in the Level 1 in Work-based Animal Care qualification. City & Guilds have told us they will explore the need for additional content on animal biology with centres in autumn 2022 and, if necessary, update the Level 1 in Work-based Animal Care qualification.
11	We also shared with City & Guilds the desire from learning providers for agriculture qualifications to contain additional content on environmental conservation, sustainability, and food production. City & Guilds have indicated that their engagement with centres has also highlighted this desire, which they will address in the development of an appropriate bilingual offer for a level 3 agriculture qualification.
12	We shared with City & Guilds the findings relating to the length of the assessment window for the synoptic testing on the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Animal Management qualifications. City & Guilds told us that they will explore these concerns with centres in autumn 2022 and review the length of the synoptic window.

<b>13</b>	We met with the BHSQ awarding body and shared with them the findings relating to the scheduling of assessments at specific time periods which do not always align with an apprentice's completion dates. They told us that they will accommodate, where appropriate, any assessment requirements and they encourage centres to inform them of their needs. We have communicated this to the centres concerned.
<b>14</b>	We shared the findings of the Review with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and brought to their attention the findings relating to Welsh-medium qualifications. We will continue to engage with the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and update them on the new agriculture qualifications that are available through the medium of Welsh.

## Chapter 2: Sector overview

In this chapter, we present data relating to agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications offered in Wales.

**2.1** Agriculture, horticulture and animal care is a broad sector area which encompasses a wide variety of subjects. As well as the overarching subjects, the sector also includes, for example, forestry, equine, and waste management. As shown in Table 1<sup>2</sup>, there are 179 designated agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications available at level 3 and below in Wales.

**Table 1: The number of designated qualifications available in Wales**

Entry Level	Level 1	Level 1 /Level 2	Level 2	Level 3	Total
20	19	1	74	65	179

**2.2** Data from the Welsh Examinations Database (WED) and Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) databases for 2019/20 showed that over 2,000 entries, for qualifications in this sector, were recorded for learners in maintained secondary schools, further education colleges and work-based learning providers across Wales (Table 2<sup>3</sup>).

**Table 2: Entries on designated qualifications in the agriculture, horticulture and animal care sector across provider types in 2019/20**

Level	Entries in further education	Entries in secondary schools	Entries in work-based learning	Total entries
Entry Level	20	*	0	20
Level 1	185	10	20	215
Level 1/Level 2	0	25	0	25
Level 2	635	300	255	1,190
Level 3	635	30	225	895
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,475</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>2,345</b>

<sup>2</sup> Data from QiW 18 May 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Source: Qualifications Wales' analysis of Welsh Government WED and LLWR data for 2019-20 entries (entry numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5 and any figure less than 5 but greater than 0 is represented with \*). The data includes qualification entries in maintained secondary schools for pre-16 and post-16 learners. Totals have been rounded independently and therefore may not match the sum of rounded figures. The WED and LLWR data for 20/21 was not available at the time of writing this report.

**2.3** In 2019/20, there were nine awarding bodies offering agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications in Wales. City & Guilds accounted for the majority (60%) of entries in 2019/20 (Table 3<sup>3</sup>).

**Table 3: Entries in 2019/20 per qualification level across awarding bodies**

<b>Awarding Body</b>	<b>Entry Level</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 1/ Level 2</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Market Share</b>
<b>City &amp; Guilds</b>	0	215	0	545	635	1,395	60%
<b>Pearson</b>	0	0	25	430	175	630	27%
<b>CIWM (WAMITAB)</b>	0	0	0	95	60	155	7%
<b>Royal Horticultural Society (RHS)</b>	0	0	0	75	0	75	3%
<b>British Horse Society Qualifications (BHSQ)</b>	0	0	0	15	15	30	1%
<b>1st4sport Qualifications</b>	*	0	0	15	5	25	1%
<b>Agored Cymru</b>	20	0	0	0	0	20	<1%
<b>Skills and Education Group Awards (SEG)</b>	0	0	0	10	0	10	<1%
<b>Lantra Awards</b>	0	0	0	5	0	5	<1%

**2.4** The agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications with the highest number of entries in 2019/20 across maintained secondary schools, further education colleges and work-based learning providers in Wales are shown in Table 4<sup>3</sup>. The data shows that six of the ten qualifications with the highest number of entries in 2019/20 were offered by City & Guilds.

**Table 4: Qualifications with the highest overall entries for 2019/20**

<b>Qualification title</b>	<b>Entries in further education</b>	<b>Entries in work-based learning</b>	<b>Entries in secondary schools</b>	<b>Total entries</b>
Pearson BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Agriculture	0	0	195	195
City & Guilds Level 2 Technical Certificate in Animal Care	155	0	0	155
City & Guilds Level 3 Advanced Technical Extended Diploma in Animal Management (1080 GLH)	120	0	0	120
City & Guilds Level 1 Diploma in Land-based Studies	105	0	0	105
City & Guilds Level 3 Advanced Technical Diploma in Animal Management (540 GLH)	105	0	0	105
City & Guilds Level 3 Diploma in Veterinary Nursing	5	55	0	60
CIWM (WAMITAB) Level 2 Diploma for Sustainable Recycling Activities	20	35	0	55
City & Guilds Level 3 Extended Diploma in Animal Management	50	0	0	50
RHS Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture	50	0	0	50
Pearson BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Agriculture	45	0	0	45

## Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter, we outline how we conducted this phase 2 sector review.

### Stakeholder engagement

**3.1** We addressed the aims of the Review through detailed stakeholder interviews and an online learner survey. As shown in Figure 1, we conducted 45 interviews with a range of relevant stakeholders, and we gathered the views of 145 learners through our online survey.

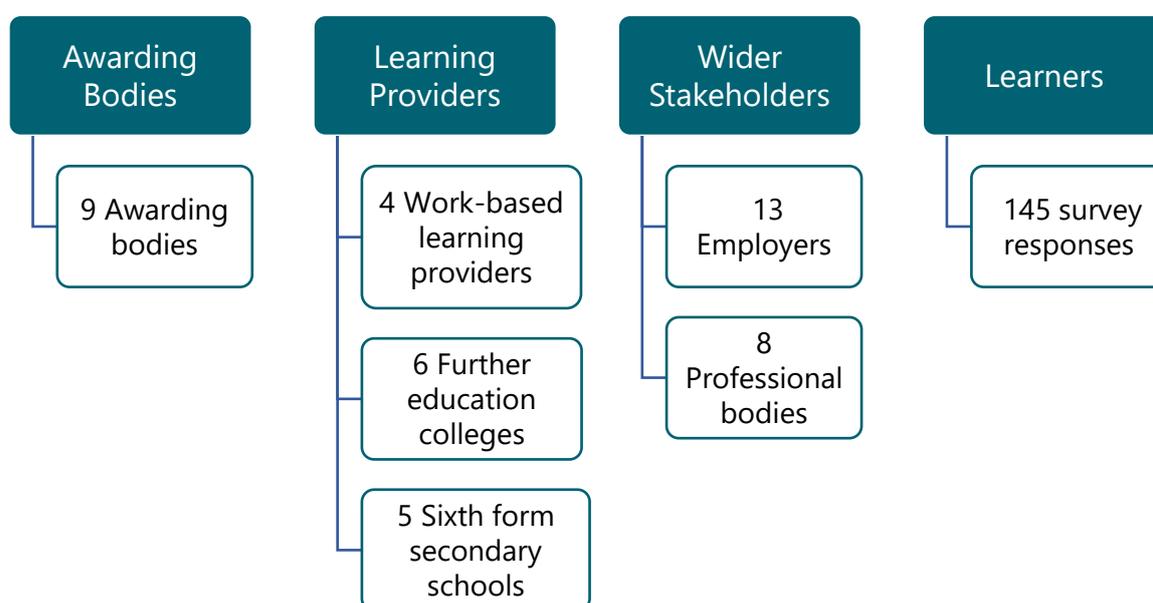


Figure 1 – Stakeholders interviewed

**3.2** At the beginning of the Review, we interviewed all awarding bodies offering agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications in Wales to discuss their plans for continuing to offer qualifications within the scope of the Review. We then conducted follow-up meetings with the awarding bodies to discuss the emerging findings and potential solutions.

**3.3** We conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with learning providers, employers, and professional bodies. All interviews were conducted online using Microsoft Teams by a small team of staff from Qualifications Wales between September 2021 and January 2022. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed by the Review Team. Once all transcripts had been analysed, reviewers came together to agree cross-cutting themes that emerged across the groups of participants.

## Online questionnaire

**3.4** To gather learners' viewpoints of their qualifications, a questionnaire was made available via the Smart Survey platform between October 2021 and January 2022. A survey was deemed the most suitable method to gather learners' views to ensure that all learners had the opportunity to contribute, and the survey could be completed when convenient to avoid any additional burden on learners and centres.

**3.5** We received a total of 111 full responses, and 34 partial responses. 80% of respondents were 16–19-year-olds who were studying at further education colleges, but we also received responses from learners studying at sixth form secondary schools and work-based learning providers.

## Methodological considerations

**3.6** Although it was not possible to engage with everyone, we are confident that we have been able to secure a sample that is representative of the stakeholder groups across the sector. As with previous sector reviews, it has been encouraging that there has been a high level of consistency between the findings that have emerged from discussions with different stakeholders.

**3.7** Our engagement with stakeholders and the responses to our online questionnaire provide us with useful insight into the opinions and perceptions of those involved. We have presented accurately the opinions expressed, but we are not always able to validate or evaluate the accuracy of those opinions.

## Chapter 4: The overall range of qualifications

In this chapter, we report on the findings relating to the range of agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications offered in Wales.

### The range of qualifications

**4.1** There is a range of qualifications available in this sector and representatives from learning providers told us that the qualifications currently offered in Wales meet the needs of most learners. In response to the learner survey, 94% of learners also told us that they had ample options when choosing which qualifications to study. Representatives from awarding bodies offering qualifications in agriculture, horticulture and animal care reassured us about the continuation of their offer in Wales. They said that they had no current plans to withdraw any qualifications, where there is a need or demand for them in Wales.

*"We have that range of practical courses, theory-based courses, entry level, level 1, level 2, level 3, we have got the [City & Guilds] Technical, and the full range from agriculture, countryside, horticulture, animal and equine. So, there is a really good range of courses. We have got something there to suit every level of learner."*

Lecturer in further education college

**4.2** Representatives from several learning providers told us that the Level 1 in Land-based Studies, offered by Pearson and City & Guilds, contains a range of relevant units which provide learners with the opportunity to follow different pathways within the sector and allows learning providers to tailor the qualification to different employer needs.

*"We moved over to the [City & Guilds] land-based qualification because we were doing the animal care specific qualification and actually the land-based allows us to be able to go across more sectors."*

Work-based learning tutor

**4.3** However, concerns were raised, by representatives from learning providers, that some qualifications were coming to the end of their typical final start dates<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Typical Designation/Approval final start date is the final date that a learner can start a course leading to a qualification that is eligible for use on publicly funded programmes of learning for learners under the age of 19, based on a typical delivery model.

and had not yet been extended or replaced by awarding bodies. For example, representatives from further education colleges told us that the City & Guilds Level 2 Diploma in Animal Care was no longer available for learners in Wales, and this has meant that level 1 learners have not been able to progress to study this qualification.

*"It is an ongoing battle to make sure existing qualifications have been updated on the funding list. I mean right now we have got [City & Guilds] Level 2 Animal Care Technical qualifications not funded."*

Lecturer in further education college

**4.4** A further example of concerns about the availability of qualifications was raised by representatives from sixth form secondary schools. They told us that the Pearson BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Agriculture, which is primarily delivered to 14–16-year-olds, was no longer available for public funding in Wales. Although the primary focus of the Review was qualifications delivered as part of post-16 programmes of learning, it was important to address this issue as this qualification is delivered through the medium of Welsh and English in several secondary schools and further education colleges. We were also told that no suitable alternative qualification was available.

#### **What have we done to overcome this concern?**

We shared with awarding bodies all concerns from stakeholders about qualifications that were no longer designated or soon to expire. We strongly encouraged the relevant awarding bodies to extend the designation of the affected qualifications. In response to our discussion, the relevant qualifications identified by the Review have now been extended. For example, we met with Pearson and shared with them the concerns from sixth form secondary schools that the BTEC Level 2 Extended Certificate in Agriculture qualification had expired. We encouraged Pearson to extend the designation typical final start date which they have done until December 2024 while they work on an alternative offer.

**4.5** Representatives from learning providers and learners spoke positively about the qualifications offered by the BHSQ awarding body saying that the qualifications were highly valued by employers and enabled learners to progress into equine-related employment. However, we were told by employers and learning providers that they would like the Level 1 Certificate in BHS Riding Horses and

the Level 1 Certificate in BHS Horse Knowledge and Care qualifications to be designated as eligible for public funding in Wales.

#### **What have we done to overcome this concern?**

We met with the BHSQ awarding body to share our findings about the demand from employers and learning providers for the Level 1 Certificate in BHS Riding Horses and the Level 1 Certificate in BHS Horse Knowledge and Care qualifications to be designated in Wales. Representatives from BHSQ told us they intend to engage with learning providers in summer 2022 to explore the demand for these qualifications in Wales and, if demand is identified, submit them for designation.

**4.6** We heard concerns from one large, pan-Wales work-based learning provider about the requirements within the Level 3 Diploma for Sustainable Recycling Activities qualification that is part of the Level 3 Sustainable Resource Management apprenticeship framework. They told us that individuals need to be in supervisory roles to be able to undertake the mandatory team supervision units within the qualification. They expressed concerns that this restricted the progression of some individuals as the number of supervisory roles in industry are limited. They suggested that if these supervisory units became optional more learners could progress to the level 3 qualification.

**4.7** A similar concern was raised by representatives from another work-based learning provider who told us that the City & Guilds Level 3 Diploma in Work-based Horticulture, part of the Level 3 Horticulture apprenticeship framework, also requires learners to hold a supervisory role which impacts on the number of learners progressing to the level 3 apprenticeship.

*"We've got quite a number of level 2s that have finished their horticulture qualification and they could quite easily do a level 3 [qualification] but they're not in a job role where they're managing anybody or a project."*

Work-based learning tutor

#### **What will we do to overcome this concern?**

We have shared with Welsh Government the findings relating to the demand from work-based learning providers for non-supervisory pathways on level 3 apprenticeship frameworks.

## Future considerations

- 4.8** Subject areas within pet services such as dog grooming, pet-sitting, and pet welfare were identified by representatives of several learning providers as growth areas in terms of demand from learners. However, representatives from learning providers told us that there are no suitable level 1 dog grooming qualifications designated in Wales. They told us that either a level 1 dog grooming qualification or additional optional units within the level 1 animal care qualifications could provide learners with introductory skills in dog grooming and support them to progress to higher-level qualifications in this subject.

### What have we done to overcome this concern?

We met with iPet and Lantra Awards and shared with them our findings that centres would welcome a level 1 dog grooming qualification or additional dog grooming units within the level 1 animal care qualifications to support learners' progression to higher-level qualifications. iPet have indicated that they will explore developing a level 1 qualification in December 2022 and Lantra are currently engaging with centres to explore the demand for a level 1 qualification in this subject.

- 4.9** Representatives from a few further education colleges told us that they are considering introducing qualifications in environmental conservation and countryside management, including arboriculture and forestry, to align with Welsh Government priorities and the new Sustainable Farming Scheme<sup>1</sup>. Qualifications in these subject areas are currently available for delivery in Wales.

*"I am thinking particularly about the environmental sector, so we identified a couple of years ago that that is probably our biggest potential growth area for meeting the needs of local employers and I think long-term as a college that's something that we will need to look into, is the full-time offer of forestry, arboriculture, and land and countryside management."*

Lecturer in further education college

- 4.10** Representatives from a few further education colleges and sixth form secondary schools stated they had declining learner numbers on agriculture and horticulture qualifications. Employers told us that they were struggling to fill vacancies in a variety of occupations such as greenkeeping, forestry and land management. We were also told that

vet nursing was experiencing shortages. Employers said they would welcome more support for mature learners to access the qualifications as the entry requirements of GCSE Maths, English and Science can potentially be a barrier.

*“There’s lots of jobs out there, but the engagement that we have had with some local landscapers suggests that they find it really difficult to recruit anybody. And yet we have got really low numbers of learners nationally wanting to study horticulture – there is quite a mismatch there.”*

Lecturer in further education college

## The wider UK context

- 4.11** There are significant policy changes to vocational qualifications happening in England in response to the UK Government’s Post-16 Skills Plan<sup>5</sup>. In particular, the UK Government’s Department for Education has begun to publish lists of level 3 qualifications that overlap with its range of ‘T level’ qualifications and which it will consequently ‘de-fund’ in England. We expect the list of level 3 qualifications that overlap with waves 3 and 4 of T levels, which includes agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications, to be published in 2023. This ‘de-funding’ does not apply in Wales.
- 4.12** We have held regular discussions with the awarding bodies that offer qualifications likely to be affected by the introduction of ‘T levels’ in England, as well as specific discussions with awarding bodies as part of phase 2 sector reviews. All of these discussions have been reassuringly positive and awarding bodies have confirmed their desire to remain active in Wales. For example, at the time of writing, City & Guilds are engaging with centres in Wales with a view to creating a replacement level 3 qualification in agriculture to meet the needs of learners in Wales in the longer term. Furthermore, Pearson have extended the designation start dates of a range of their level 3 BTEC qualifications – including agriculture, horticulture and animal qualifications – to August 2026 with certifications until August 2028 (meaning that at least four more cohorts can take those qualifications) to provide medium-term certainty for learners and providers in Wales. Other awarding bodies have also expressed a desire to continue to offer qualifications in Wales in this sector.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/536043/Post-16\\_Skills\\_Plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/536043/Post-16_Skills_Plan.pdf)

## Chapter 5: Welsh-medium qualifications

The availability of Welsh-medium qualifications is one of the two primary considerations of phase 2 sector reviews and in this chapter, we present the findings relating to Welsh-medium qualifications.

- 5.1** Representatives from work-based learning providers told us that they offer the City & Guilds work-based agriculture and horticulture qualifications through the medium of Welsh. They said that other Welsh-medium qualifications were available, but demand from learners was low.
- 5.2** Representatives from Welsh-medium sixth form secondary schools and further education colleges emphasised the importance of agriculture and animal care qualifications being available through the medium of Welsh, especially in rural settings.

*“It is so important that we do have Welsh-medium provision because the agricultural kids tend to be from Welsh-speaking backgrounds, it is their first language. It is so important that they are able to do these courses through the medium of Welsh, so it really is vital to us.”*

Teacher in sixth form secondary school

- 5.3** Representatives from further education colleges raised the concern that the City & Guilds Level 3 Advanced Technical Extended Diploma in Agriculture was not available through the medium of Welsh. This concern was also shared with us by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. This is a large qualification, equivalent in size to three A Levels, with a significant amount of external assessment which makes it challenging for City & Guilds to offer through the medium of Welsh. However, there are a significant number of learners wanting to complete the qualification through the medium of Welsh at three further education colleges.

*“... all of our qualifications are delivered bilingually, and learners are given assessment opportunities, where available, but until the City & Guilds course becomes available through the medium of Welsh, it is quite difficult.”*

Lecturer in further education college

### **What have we done to overcome this concern?**

We shared with City & Guilds the findings relating to the availability of the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Agriculture qualification through the medium of Welsh. City & Guilds have responded positively to the request, and we have grant funded City & Guilds to make the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Agriculture qualification available through the medium of Welsh, for the learner cohorts starting in 2021/22 and 2022/23, whilst we collaborate with them on the development of an appropriate bilingual level 3 agriculture qualification.

- 5.4** Representatives from further education colleges, and learners as part of our survey, told us that there was demand for the City & Guilds Level 3 Advanced Technical in Animal Management to be available through the medium of Welsh. Representatives from one further education college told us that they have continued to deliver the City & Guilds Level 3 Extended Diploma QCF qualifications, for both agriculture and animal care, because they are internally assessed and can be delivered through the medium of Welsh.

*“But certainly, the Welsh language is a huge issue and we have taken a decision this current academic year to go back to [City & Guilds] legacy qualifications purely so that they can administer the old-style coursework assignments which do not have to be released like an exam paper. So, the staff can make sure that they get them translated and the students can actually complete the work in Welsh.”*

Lecturer in further education college

### **What have we done to overcome this concern?**

We shared with City & Guilds the findings relating to the need for the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Animal Management qualifications to be available through the medium of Welsh. City & Guilds are currently engaging with centres to assess the demand for the Level 3 in Animal Management and other related qualifications through the medium of Welsh. We are working with City & Guilds to expand the appropriate bilingual offer to include a level 3 animal care qualification.

- 5.5** We were told by representatives from one large, pan-Wales work-based learning provider that they needed to use the language function on the e-portfolio platform, Learning Assistant, to offer the CIWM (WAMITAB)

sustainable recycling activities qualifications bilingually as they were not available through the medium of Welsh.

*"We have [demand] in North Wales, particularly in Gwynedd and Anglesey, so from Learning Assistant we can press a button which will automatically change all the standards into a variety of languages. We have used that facility [to deliver through the medium of Welsh]."*

Work-based learning tutor

#### **What have we done to overcome this concern?**

We shared with CIWM (WAMITAB) the findings relating to the availability of their qualifications through the medium of Welsh. In response to our discussions, they have successfully applied for our Welsh Language Support Grant to make available the Level 2 Diploma for Sustainable Recycling Activities and Level 3 Diploma for Sustainable Recycling Activities (supervisory) qualifications through the medium of Welsh. CIWM (WAMITAB) have indicated that these qualifications will be available through the medium of Welsh.

**5.6** Representatives from work-based learning providers told us that more Welsh-medium resources had been developed to support teachers and learners. For example, we were told about the positive impact that the Welsh-medium agriculture resources developed by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol were having on the delivery of agriculture qualifications through the medium of Welsh. In our learner survey, most learners studying through the medium of Welsh told us that they felt that they had sufficient Welsh-medium resources to support them to undertake their qualifications.

*"We have got all of the [work-based] agriculture resources now available bilingually and they've [Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol] just started translating some of the horticulture ones."*

Work-based learning tutor

## Chapter 6: The content and currency of qualifications

In this chapter, we present the findings relating to the content and currency of agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications.

- 6.1** Representatives from most learning providers told us that the agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications they offer were up-to-date and included relevant content. For example, representatives from all the sixth form secondary schools commented that the Pearson BTEC level 2 and level 3 agriculture and animal care qualifications contained up-to-date content. In response to the learner survey, 98% of learners said that their qualification was engaging and interesting.

*"I love the different topics that we cover. Each one is unique and interesting in their own way."*

Learner

- 6.2** Representatives from one large, pan-Wales work-based learning provider delivering CIWM (WAMITAB) sustainable recycling activities qualifications told us that the qualifications would benefit from additional optional units to accommodate the different technologies and future developments within this sector.

### **What have we done to overcome this concern?**

We shared the findings with CIWM (WAMITAB) regarding additional optional units and encouraged them to explore the demand with the work-based learning provider who shared the feedback with us. CIWM (WAMITAB) told us that they will address the need for additional content as part of the review of their level 2 and level 3 Sustainable Recycling Activities qualifications scheduled to be undertaken in autumn 2022.

- 6.3** Representatives from a few work-based learning providers expressed a desire for the City & Guilds Level 1 in Work-based Animal Care qualifications to include content on animal biology, as this would support learners when they progress to relevant higher-level qualifications.

*"There is no animal biology, and they [tutors] feel that basic biology, it always comes into the other qualification. It's just missing in animal, and that was the only thing they could say that they felt was missing. So maybe some basic biology might need to be in one of the mandatory units."*

Work-based learning tutor

#### **What have we done to overcome these concerns?**

We shared with City & Guilds the request from work-based learning providers for additional content on animal biology in the Level 1 in Work-based Animal Care qualification. City & Guilds have told us they will explore the need for additional content on animal biology with centres in autumn 2022 and, if needed, update the Level 1 in Work-based Animal Care qualification.

- 6.4** Representatives from further education colleges told us that agriculture qualifications may benefit from a generic unit on research and development to allow exploration of modern technologies, as well as additional content on environmental conservation, sustainability, and food production. The new Sustainable Farming Scheme<sup>1</sup> for farmers in Wales focuses more on environmental conservation, carbon reduction and land management and this, learning providers said, will need to be reflected in agriculture qualifications to prepare learners for employment within the sector.

#### **What have we done to overcome these concerns?**

We also shared with City & Guilds the desire from learning providers for agriculture qualifications to contain additional content on environmental conservation, sustainability, and food production. City & Guilds have indicated that their engagement with centres has also highlighted this desire, which they will address in the development of an appropriate bilingual offer for a level 3 agriculture qualification.

## Chapter 7: Assessment

In this chapter, we report on the findings that relate to the assessment of agriculture, horticulture and animal care qualifications.

- 7.1** Representatives from work-based learning providers and sixth form secondary schools told us that the assessment on the qualifications they deliver are manageable and appropriate. They did say that assessment criteria can be repetitive if assessed in isolation, but they explained that they holistically map across units so that learners are not overburdened by assessments. In response to the survey questions on assessment, most learners (84%) felt that there was an appropriate variety of assessment in their qualifications and most learners (88%) also thought that the amount of assessment was manageable.

*“There are presentations, practical and written elements included [as assessments]. We also engage with the animals and [we have] set up an electric fence and done a pH test.”*

Learner

- 7.2** Representatives from most further education colleges told us that the synoptic testing for the City & Guilds Level 3 Advanced Technical in Animal Management qualifications had to be carefully scheduled to ensure animal welfare. Learning providers said that they would appreciate a longer window of assessment as currently the window is four weeks, and this can be difficult to manage if they have large cohorts of learners needing to be assessed.

*“Obviously with regards to animal welfare, you know, the animals can only be handled a certain number of times. So, being able to meet the requirements in the narrow window proves difficult when you have got very large numbers of students wanting to take the qualifications.”*

Lecturer in further education college

### **What have we done to overcome this concern?**

We shared with City & Guilds the findings relating to the length of the assessment window for synoptic testing on the Level 3 Advanced Technical in Animal Management qualifications. City & Guilds have told us they will explore these concerns with centres in autumn 2022 and review the length of the synoptic window.

**7.3** There were mixed views from representatives of further education colleges when they were asked about the synoptic testing used in the City & Guilds Advanced Technical qualifications. Representatives from some further education colleges reported that it was a robust assessment of learner performance and was less onerous than continuous internal assessment. However, representatives from other further education colleges explained that it can be difficult to manage, particularly with large groups of learners, and said this was the reason they were not offering the City & Guilds Advanced Technical qualifications.

**7.4** Representatives from work-based learning providers told us that the BHSQ assessments were scheduled in specific periods of time throughout the year, and these do not always fit into the expected end dates of apprentices. This can result in an apprentice not completing their qualification within their expected end date, especially if they are required to retake the assessment.

#### **What have we done to overcome this concern?**

We met with the BHSQ awarding body and shared with them the findings relating to the scheduling of assessments at specific time periods which do not always align with an apprentices' completion dates. They told us that they will accommodate, where appropriate, any assessment requirements and they encourage centres to inform them of their needs. We have communicated this to the centres concerned.

## Chapter 8: Conclusion

We believe that the actions we have taken will address the issues identified by the Review, as far as reasonably possible.

We are confident that these actions will ensure that an appropriate range of qualifications, including Welsh-medium qualifications, are available to meet the needs of learners in Wales.

We will continue to monitor the actions arising from the review and work with awarding bodies to address areas of concern.

We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all those who gave their time to participate in the Review and provided such invaluable expertise and insight. Their knowledge and understanding of the agriculture, horticulture and animal care sector helped establish a robust evidence base to structure the report. We value every contribution made to support this Review.

