GCSE Health and Social Care, and Childcare Engagement Summary

Introduction

In March 2017, Qualifications Wales published a determination to restrict a new suite of Health and Social Care and Childcare qualifications\(^1\) for Wales. This suite includes the GCSE Health and Social Care, and Childcare qualification which will be available for first teaching from September 2019. This new GCSE qualification is being developed by the awarding body consortium of City & Guilds London Institute and WJEC (the Consortium) and will be the only version of the qualification available to learners on state funded programmes in Wales.

Between 22\(^{nd}\) November and 19\(^{th}\) January, we carried out public engagement activities, which consisted of face-to-face focus groups and an online survey. In these engagement activities we asked questions in relation to the proposed subject aims and objectives, subject content and assessment arrangements specified in the Approval Criteria for the new GCSE Health and Social Care, and Childcare qualification.

Summary of Engagement

In total we hosted five focus groups across Wales during the engagement period, in Wrexham, Bangor, Swansea and Newport with a total of 18 individuals attending these events. The focus group events outlined the purpose of the engagement, summarised project activity to date and allowed attendees to ask questions about and make comments on the structure, content and assessment arrangements proposed for the qualification in the approval criteria document. We received 131 full or partial responses to our online survey.

Subject aims and Objectives

Our engagement activities asked for feedback on our proposed subject aims and assessment objectives. Most respondents agreed with our proposals, however, some expressed concern around the level of language used. While acknowledging that the language was appropriate for Approval Criteria, these respondents suggested that ‘more user-friendly language’ be used when engaging with learners. Responding to feedback that the qualification should introduce learners to a variety of sector contexts, the following amendments were made:

Subject aim and objective iii) ‘use an enquiring, critical approach...........’ was removed;

and the following subject aim and objective was added:

‘Develop an awareness of career pathways available within the health, social care and childcare sector’.

\(^1\) http://qualificationswales.org/media/2535/230517-determination-to-restrict-hsc-final-e.pdf
Subject Content and Skills

During our engagement activities, we asked stakeholder for their views on the proposed subject content. Most respondents agreed with the proposed subject content with one respondent stating:

‘this seems to bring together both the current qualifications which will give learners more breadth of knowledge’

A few respondents suggested that the qualifications should be split in two: one for Health and Social Care and one for Childcare, however, others supported the proposal for a single qualification with pathways. We have decided to have one qualification with a single and double award as this gives learners an opportunity to develop a breadth of understanding across both sectors and an introduction to both Health and Social Care and Childcare.

Following the engagement activities, the subject content was developed further by our key stakeholder partners (Social Care Wales (SCW), NHS Wales and the Consortium) to ensure that it is the most relevant and up to date content. Following this development some topic areas were added, removed or moved to a different subject area. However, the subject areas to be included remain unchanged as: Human Growth, Development and Well-Being; Promoting and Maintaining Health and Well-Being; Health and Social Care and Childcare in the 21st Century and Promoting and Supporting Health and Well-Being to Achieve Positive Outcomes.

We also asked respondents whether they agreed with the proposed list of skills. Many respondents agreed with the proposed list of skills, one stating that they ‘promote confidence and value based qualities’. A small number of respondents suggested that additional skills should be included, such as ‘IT skills, analysis, interpreting data, being critical and critical thinking...’ should be included.

Scheme of Assessment

During our engagement we asked two questions about the scheme of assessment: one about the wording of the assessment objectives and one about the weightings of these assessment objectives.

A majority of respondents agreed with the wording of the assessment objectives, however, we have subsequently removed play from the wording of the assessment objectives through discussion with our key stakeholder partners. There was some concern about the wording of assessment objective three. We have therefore amended the wording for this objective from:

‘Analyse and evaluate health, social care and childcare development and play information and issues to demonstrate understanding, making reasoned judgements and drawing conclusions’;

to

‘Analyse and evaluate health, social care and childcare concepts, values and issues, making reasoned judgements and drawing conclusions’
A majority of respondents agreed with the proposed weightings of the assessment objectives. We have not changed these weightings following engagement.

**Qualification Title**

In our engagement activities we proposed the title of the qualification to be: Level 1 and 2 Health, Social Care and Childcare with an endorsement of single or double award dependent on the programme undertaken. Respondents to the engagement suggested a number of differences in qualification titles, including using the term GCSE, VCSE and removing Level 1 and 2 from the title.

Following the engagement activities, and as a result of further development of the subject content and qualification structure by the Consortium, it has been decided that the qualification title, dependent on programme taken, will either be:

- GCSE Health and Social Care, and Childcare
- GCSE Health and Social Care, and Childcare (Double Award)

This decision aligns with the titling for GCSEs set out in the GCSE Qualification Approval Criteria document.

**Support and Resources**

Through our engagement activities we asked respondents about what support and resources they feel centres and practitioners would require. Responses included assessor development, a range of learning resources, best practice guidance and text books amongst others. We have shared this information with the awarding body consortium to support their change management programme planning.

**Other comments**

A few respondents expressed disappointment that the new suite of qualifications will not include a specific provision for level one learners. On reviewing the qualifications available for the sector during our determination to restrict, we identified a number of qualifications at level one, provided by a variety of awarding bodies that would be suitable for these learners. These include level one qualifications in vocational studies which have optional units in health and social care and childcare.
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