Annual Review

2024/25

HERE FOR YOU
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Ian Morgan
Chief Executive, WJEC

This year has been transformational for our Made-for-Wales journey. Our first Wave of qualifications are now being taught in schools and colleges across Wales, supported by our full suite of free adaptable Digital Resources. The delivery has been enhanced by our Pan-Wales Professional Learning events; these are being complemented with additional training opportunities over the course of the academic year.

Building on this foundation, we have achieved another significant milestone: the approval of our Wave two Made-for-Wales specifications for teaching from September 2026. These qualifications reflect our teams' dedication and stakeholder input from across Wales. Our co-construction approach remains the cornerstone of our qualification development, combining educational and industry expertise to ensure our qualifications meet the real needs of learners, educators, and employers. Alongside our development work, we continue supporting schools and colleges with tailored Professional Learning and free adaptable Digital Resources, empowering educators to deliver these qualifications with confidence.

Extensive work is already underway developing our third Wave of Made-for-Wales qualifications. This diverse portfolio includes industry-focused Vocational Certificates for Secondary Education, a Skills Suite and Personal Project qualification building on our Skills Challenge Certificate success, alongside Foundation qualifications. Wave three builds on our co-construction tradition through expanded industry partnerships, ensuring these qualifications deliver genuine market value and stronger connections to the world of work.

This Annual Review demonstrates our sustained progress delivering our Made-for-Wales qualifications, deepening stakeholder partnerships, celebrating innovation and excellence, and advancing our commitment to sustainable operations. These achievements have only been possible through exceptional collaboration and support. I want to thank our schools, colleges, and my WJEC colleagues for their invaluable support and hard work throughout this year. Your dedication and participation have been fundamental to our success. I encourage you to continue taking an active role in our ongoing initiatives as we build on this year's achievements. We remain committed to delivering the highest level of support, advice, and guidance you have come to expect from us.

As we celebrate another remarkable year, we remain committed to supporting educational communities throughout Wales. Our dedication continues to position WJEC at the heart of curriculum development and qualification delivery.

It's gratifying to witness WJEC championing Wales' new curriculum ambitions. By adapting our qualifications and resources to meet these progressive objectives, we reaffirm our role as Wales' trusted awarding body.

WJEC maintains its responsiveness to evolving learner and societal needs. Our continuous qualification developments demonstrate our dedication to progress, ensuring learners gain the skills and understanding needed to excel globally and pursue promising futures.

Looking ahead, the Board has every confidence that WJEC will deepen its collaboration with educators and partners. We remain committed to developing qualifications designed for Wales' diverse learners, strengthening our co-construction approach through meaningful stakeholder engagement.

On behalf of the Board, I extend our sincere gratitude to WJEC for this year's exceptional achievements. The organisation's collective effort and commitment have been instrumental in our achievements, driving our success and impact in education.

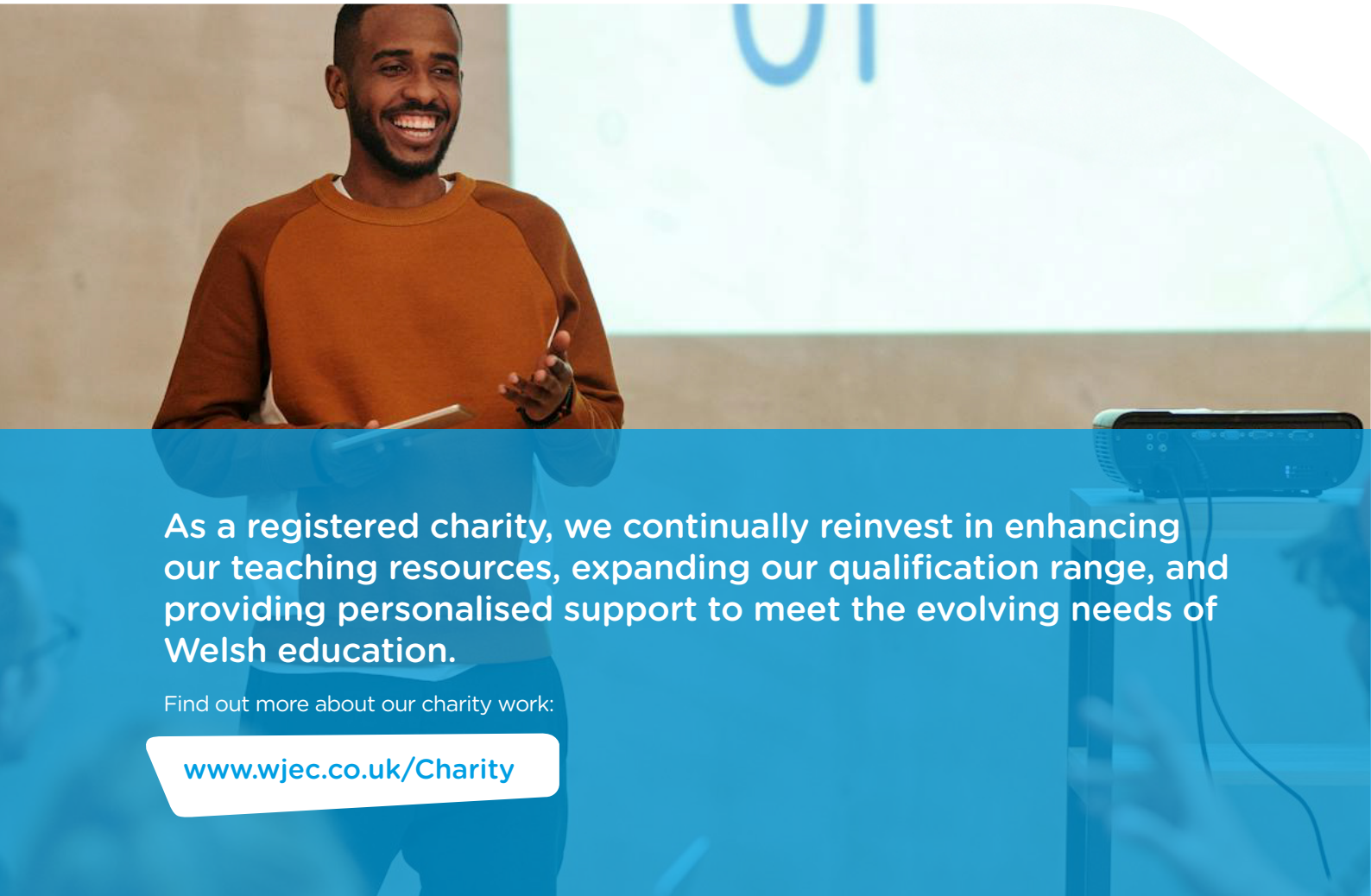
Jessica Leigh-Jones
Chair of the Board
of Directors

Here for you: Supporting schools and colleges across Wales

As Wales' largest awarding body, we welcome the new academic year with our continued commitment to providing inclusive bilingual qualifications, expert-led support, and modern, accessible assessment to schools and colleges throughout Wales.

The start of teaching of our first suite of Made-for-Wales GCSEs and related qualifications highlights a key milestone in this journey and represents our ongoing dedication to educational excellence in Wales. We understand the importance of ensuring schools and colleges feel confident and supported throughout this transition, and we're here every step of the way.

Collaboration remains at the heart of our approach. We maintain strong partnerships with educational communities across Wales - from schools and colleges to advocacy groups, governing committees, regional consortia, and Qualifications Wales. Through these relationships, we support the Welsh Government's national mission of delivering education that champions 'high standards and aspirations for all.'



As a registered charity, we continually reinvest in enhancing our teaching resources, expanding our qualification range, and providing personalised support to meet the evolving needs of Welsh education.

Find out more about our charity work:

www.wjec.co.uk/Charity

WJEC IN NUMBERS

We awarded over

417,000

QUALIFICATIONS IN 2024/25

We offer nearly

200

GCSE, AS, A LEVEL AND VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Developed

1,192

INDIVIDUAL LESSONS

537 **KNOWLEDGE ORGANISERS**

325 **BILINGUAL BLENDED LEARNING UNITS**

21 **TEXTBOOKS**

Marked over

1.1 MILLION

PAPERS, NEA AND ORAL EXAMINATIONS IN 2024/25

Inclusive qualifications for a modern Wales

Today's Wales is vibrant, diverse, and forward-looking - qualities that we ensure are reflected in our qualifications. We design our assessments with inclusivity and accessibility at their core, creating content that resonates with learners across the country while celebrating Wales' diversity and fostering a sense of belonging.

Supporting you from the start

Our team of over 500 dedicated employees brings expertise and passion to supporting your teaching journey. We take pride in offering direct, comprehensive support to teachers and lecturers throughout the qualification cycle - from initial teaching guidance through to final grade awards.

Elevating your teaching with our FREE resources

We continue to offer a comprehensive package of FREE bilingual Digital Resources to support the delivery of our expanding qualification portfolio. Each resource has been developed by our dedicated Digital Resources Team alongside our Subject Specialists to ensure that they develop the necessary skillsets and continue to engage and inspire learners.

SECTION 02

Delivering leading qualifications, assessment and support

The Made-for-Wales qualifications' journey continues

As we mark the start of teaching of the first Wave of our Made-for-Wales qualifications, Richard Harry, Executive Director: Qualifications and Assessment reflects on the collaborative journey that has shaped the development of these qualifications.

Written by
Richard Harry
Executive Director:
Qualifications and Assessment

Our Made-for-Wales suite represents a fundamental shift in qualification development. Purpose-built from the ground up, these qualifications are meticulously aligned with the Curriculum for Wales and its Four Purposes. Following years of focused development, they equip learners with real-world skills through coherent, accessible content that integrates local, national, and international contexts. This enables teachers and lecturers to connect lessons to meaningful experiences.

Co-constructing through strategic partnerships

From day one, we embedded stakeholder voices at the heart of our development process. Our Qualification Development, Stakeholder Reference, Learner and Union Advisory groups provided essential insights that shaped these qualifications from conception, ensuring alignment with the Curriculum for Wales.

Collaborations with anti-racism consultant Rachel Clarke and the Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning (DARPL) group proved particularly valuable by enhancing our design process to ensure we developed an inclusive qualification suite.

Separately, broader stakeholder discussions revealed equity considerations, which we addressed by implementing appropriate controls for each non-examination assessment, ensuring that learners wouldn't be disadvantaged by having less access to particular resources at home.

Working with a wide range of stakeholders has allowed us to deepen our existing understanding of Wales' unique bilingual education landscape, ensuring our qualifications effectively serve Welsh medium, English medium and bilingual schools and colleges across the country.

Supporting our teaching community

To ensure our teaching community received the necessary support to deliver the new qualifications with confidence, we published the approved specifications in autumn 2024, followed by Sample Assessment Materials and Guidance for Teaching that winter.

Responding to stakeholder views, we adjusted our timeline for GCSE Religious Studies to ensure thorough consideration of all feedback and moved GCSE History to first teaching from September 2026, to allow educators more time to familiarise themselves with the new qualification.

Additionally, we delivered a comprehensive Professional Learning programme offering online and face-to-face opportunities to suit the busy schedules of teachers and lecturers. Our pan-Wales 'Preparing to Teach' events provided us with an opportunity to talk directly with thousands of educators across Wales, allowing us to showcase the raft of support available to aid the delivery of each qualification, while offering practical insights and strategies; including walking educators through key areas like Non-Examination Assessments.

Our free Digital Resources formed another crucial support component, offering flexible, on-demand assistance to help schools manage the transition effectively. Developed based on feedback from schools and colleges, these resources represent part of a £1.5 million investment, creating 325 bespoke bilingual packages.

Each package includes Blended Learning resources and Knowledge Organisers aligned with the Curriculum for Wales. These can be easily edited and adapted to suit each school's or college's unique context, embracing the Welsh concept of Cynefin — enabling learners to develop a sense of place and promoting an understanding of Wales and how our culture, people and landscape relate to the rest of the world.

Wave 3: the journey continues

Building on this foundation, our third Wave is now in development, offering learners a diverse portfolio that will engage them through hands-on practical experiences and skills development. This includes a Personal Project and Skills Suite, as well as a range of Foundation qualifications and the Vocational Certificate of Secondary Education (VCSEs).

Utilising our established expertise, these qualifications prioritise learner engagement while upholding our rigorous standards, ensuring learners develop the skills and knowledge their future careers demand. In development of the next Wave, we are maintaining our collaborative approach by extending our partnerships to industry stakeholders to design qualifications that equip learners with relevant skills for the future workforce.

Reflecting on our impact

Consolidating this work to create qualifications that prepare learners for their next steps in education has been incredibly rewarding. We've witnessed first-hand how these qualifications resonate with learners, whose invaluable perspectives have complemented those from teachers and lecturers throughout our development journey.

Thank you for being part of this journey. As we continue the Made-for-Wales journey, we look forward to collaborating with you again to ensure our next Wave of qualifications continue to meet the needs of Wales' learners and their futures.

Learn more about our Made-for-Wales journey at: **wjec.co.uk/MadeforWales**

The support package for our **Made-for-Wales qualifications**

As the delivery of our first Wave of Made-for-Wales qualifications begins in classrooms across the country, we're proud to reflect on our journey supporting educators. Through our nationwide Professional Learning and comprehensive Digital Resources, we've created a free robust support package that empowers educators to deliver our qualifications with confidence.

Professional Learning: Building expertise nationwide

Working in close collaboration with Welsh Government, Local Authorities, Regional Consortia and Cymdeithas Ysgolion Dros Addysg Gymraeg (CYDAG), our Professional Learning programme has made significant impact across Wales.

The nationwide roadshow delivered:

- 170 events spanning 12 days
- Support for diverse educational settings including Secondary Schools, pupil referral units (PRUs), Special Schools, and Independent Schools
- Practical guidance and implementation strategies for our Made-for-Wales GCSEs

The programme's effectiveness is evident in participant feedback, with 75% of attendees reporting 'good' or 'extremely good' understanding of the new qualifications after attending sessions.

With Wave two qualifications now in development, our team is finalising another comprehensive support programme. For the latest information and to register for upcoming sessions, visit wjec.co.uk/MadeforWalesPL.

"I'm incredibly grateful for the support of our partners who helped us successfully deliver this comprehensive programme across Wales. Through effective collaboration, we've accomplished what we set out to do, providing valuable Professional Learning opportunities nationwide. With more Wave one Professional Learning planned and Wave two on the horizon, I'm proud of our achievements and the positive feedback we've received from teachers and headteachers about our extensive face-to-face support."

Nia Jones, Professional Learning Manager

Melanie Blount, Assistant Director

Feedback on our Made-for-Wales Resources has been overwhelmingly positive. Our bilingual resources are designed with the Curriculum for Wales in mind, enabling educators to adapt them according to their locality and classroom needs - creating materials that truly resonate with and inspire their learners. Developed in collaboration with curriculum specialists across Wales and beyond, each resource focuses particularly on supporting the new topics introduced within these qualifications.

FREE Digital Resources:
£1.5 Million investment to support Made-for-Wales qualifications

As part of a £1.5 million investment specifically designed to support our Made-for-Wales qualifications, we've developed 325 comprehensive resource packages. Each package includes Blended Learning resources and Knowledge Organisers, crafted with the Curriculum for Wales ethos in mind.

Made-for-Wales Digital Resources

Housed within our bespoke resources' website, our Made-for-Wales Digital Resources are presented on an intuitive, user-friendly platform designed specifically for educators.

They offer:

- **Adaptability for meaningful learning:** Resources can be easily edited and localised to align with each school or college's unique learning context, ensuring relevance to learners through the concept of Cynefin*.
- **Personal resource management:** A user-friendly dashboard allows educators to access favourited, edited, or saved resources, enabling a learner-centred approach tailored to individual needs.
- **Simple sharing capabilities:** Each tailored resource will have a unique URL for seamless sharing and home learning support.

To further enhance this package, WJEC is working alongside Adnodd, who has **committed £500,000** to produce additional support materials for these qualifications.

Looking ahead

As we continue our journey to develop the second Wave of our Made-for-Wales qualifications, we are pleased to confirm that our Digital Resources Team will be producing a package of FREE bilingual resources for each subject. The package will mirror the support offered for the first qualification Wave and will consist of Blended Learning resources and Knowledge Organisers for the second group of qualifications which will be taught from September 2026.

In 2024/25 we successfully:

CREATED **325 FREE BILINGUAL RESOURCE PACKAGES** for these new qualifications

Reached over **3,000 EDUCATORS** through online specification briefing events

LAUNCHED A NEW WEBSITE to host the full suite of Made-for-Wales Resources

Provided over **48 ASYNCHRONUS LEARNING MODULES**

Provided over **30 LIVE ONLINE EVENTS**

Delivered face-to-face training to over **6,500 EDUCATORS ACROSS WALES**

SECTION 03

Shaping the future of education in Wales

Shaping Wales' National 14-16 Qualifications:

Why is WJEC the trusted choice for 14-16 Education?

Written by Delyth Jones
Assistant Director of Qualification Development (General Qualifications)

As Wales' only awarding body developing GCSEs as part of Qualifications Wales' National Qualifications for 14-16, we bring over 75 years of experience in the delivery of trusted and valued bilingual qualifications.

In this article, Delyth Jones, Assistant Director of Qualifications Development (General Qualifications), explains how our unique position developing Made-for-Wales GCSEs alongside Vocational and Skills-based qualifications makes us the natural partner for schools and colleges across Wales.

Building on proven expertise: From Made-for-Wales GCSEs to a comprehensive qualification suite

While some may view WJEC as solely a General Qualifications awarding body, our expertise extends far beyond. Prior to the current reform programme, we established ourselves as developers of General, Vocational and Skills-based qualifications tailored specifically for Welsh learners.

Our Made-for-Wales GCSEs development has provided deep insight into how qualifications can support the Curriculum for Wales. We are in a great position to be developing General Foundation qualifications and are committed to ensuring that learners at all levels have access to high quality qualifications – like the related GCSEs, these will be based on the Statements of What Matters and the Principles of Progression. We are committed to ensuring that learners at all levels are equally valuable.

As the only board who has already developed National Qualifications for 14-16 year-olds with our first wave of GCSEs, we've created frameworks for considering how our qualifications can support schools and colleges in delivering broader aspects of the Curriculum for Wales, such as the cross-cutting themes and cross-curricular skills and how we can make space for locally devised curricula. We also introduced a range of non-examination assessments and improved representation and diversity in qualifications, enabling learners to apply knowledge in meaningful and relevant contexts.

This comprehensive experience across all qualification types offers us a unique perspective on the complete National 14-16 Qualifications offer, ensuring every qualification contributes to a coherent pathway towards realising the Four Purposes.

The Skills Suite: Building on a decade of success

Since introducing the Skills Challenge Certificate (SCC) in 2015, we have established unparalleled expertise in skills qualifications for 14–16-year-olds. Our Regional Support Officers maintain close relationships with schools and colleges across Wales, providing invaluable feedback — intelligence we are applying directly to develop the new Personal Project and Skills Suite.

These qualifications will equip learners with essential skills for life and work, offering centres a seamless transition from the SCC. Our skills portfolio demonstrates considerable breadth: from Pathways to Employment to our Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales.

Vocational qualifications: Creating valued pathways

Our vocational provision must be equally valued by learners, parents and employers. Building on our reputation for high-quality qualifications with real currency, we're developing Vocational Certificates for Secondary Education (VCSEs) and Work-related Foundation Qualifications that equip learners with essential knowledge and skills while responding to Wales' evolving industry needs.

Our recent Semiconductor qualifications — developed with employers and industry experts to meet emerging Welsh industry demands — demonstrate our agility in creating future-ready qualifications.

Co-construction: Proven partnership approach

Co-construction is fundamental to our approach. Our recently developed Sustainability qualifications, created in partnership with the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, demonstrate the power of true co-construction resulting in qualifications that align directly with Wales' vision for sustainability. We're now applying these proven collaborative principles with key organisations to develop our Skills Suite.

For the National 14-16 Qualifications, we've engaged extensively with stakeholders. Our development structure includes Qualification Development Advisory Groups for every subject, plus overarching groups representing school and college leaders, learners, stakeholders and unions — ensuring our qualifications deliver value across all Welsh learning communities.

Bilingual excellence: Equal provision from day one

We're committed to simultaneous Welsh and English provision. We have extensive in-house expertise and have forged close links with Canolfan Bedwyr, Bangor University, enabling us to apply best practice in Welsh medium terminology.

Learn more about WJEC's offer visit: **www.wjec/wave3**

Why centres choose WJEC?

Our proven track record establishes us as the trusted choice for high-quality bilingual qualifications. Our expertise and co-construction development approach ensures our qualifications develop learners' knowledge, understanding and skills — with clear progression routes to further education, higher education, apprenticeships or employment.

We provide comprehensive bilingual support, enabling all teachers to deliver with confidence within the Curriculum for Wales framework. As Schools and Colleges prepare to deliver the new suite of Vocational Qualifications from September 2027, they need an awarding body with comprehensive understanding of the qualification landscape. Our success in developing our new Made-for-Wales GCSEs and extensive knowledge of the Curriculum for Wales, combined with Vocational and Skills expertise, uniquely positions us to support this transition. We're shaping futures, ensuring every Welsh learner has clear pathways to success.

Made-for-Wales:

Owning diversity, inclusivity and belonging

Rachel Clarke, Diversity and Inclusion Consultant and Director of Apex Educate has worked alongside WJEC's Qualification Development Team to develop our new suite of Made-for-Wales GCSEs and related qualifications. She has supported the team to ensure that these new qualifications actively incorporate diversity, inclusion, and belonging. Here she outlines how our innovative approach will support a multi-cultural and modern Wales for today's and tomorrow's learners.

Written by Rachel Clarke
Diversity and Inclusion Consultant
and Director of Apex Educate

> The approach to WJEC's development of ensuring that their new Made-for-Wales qualifications align with the ambitions of the Curriculum for Wales, has been courageous, bold and principled. WJEC has embraced the cross-cutting theme of 'Diversity' with a deliberate commitment to ensure inclusion, diversity and belonging is not tokenistic but is authentic and has been powerful. WJEC did not make a knee-jerk decision with an absence of deep thought and consideration before embarking on their journey of ensuring the suite of qualifications met the requirements of the Curriculum for Wales. Instead, they committed to long-term reflection, development and understanding, that ultimately led to the qualifications being developed; not just for the learners of today, but for the Wales of tomorrow.

The influence of **DARPL (Diversity Anti-Racist Professional Learning)** in catalysing deeper and more nuanced conversations about belonging was significant. As one of the external partners involved in this journey, my organisation Apex Educate has seen first-hand the seriousness with which WJEC approaches its responsibility.

WJEC has created space for dialogue, challenge and meaningful collaboration. The 'heart work' necessary for reimagining the new qualifications and their design motivated WJEC's leadership to ensure this development process was carried out well. As such, the approach taken (planning in staff development, listening to stakeholder's views, reviewing the revisions carefully) has been measured and planned for, which has been important to the progress made.

WJEC made bold decisions about which texts and topics should be included in their new qualifications. This led to texts such as ***Of Mice and Men*** not appearing in the new GCSE English specification and a more global and diverse range of topics included in the new GCSE History. Choices were made after deep thought, careful listening, and guidance from those with lived experience, as well as input from teachers and Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLE). These decisions weren't about censorship, or sanitising history, but about asking better questions.

Whose voices are amplified in our classrooms and how?

Whose stories are told and whose are missing?

The Qualification Development Team has worked hard on developing their own understanding of inclusion to ensure the Curriculum for Wales is upheld and that the cross-cutting theme of 'Diversity' is authentically interwoven through the qualification design. They've taken on the challenge of unlearning, relearning, and building qualifications that reflect the world as it is - and as it could be. Diversity isn't just added in as an afterthought. It's being integrated into the core fabric of the qualifications themselves.

Stakeholder Engagement meetings have been carried out to ensure viewpoints from a wide range of people (teachers, senior leaders, regional consortia representatives and others) can be heard and considered. This kind of leadership matters. It's not performative. It's responsive. It's thoughtful and recognises that transformation, when done right, takes time.

Wave 3 qualifications are in development, and they reflect the same commitment to inclusion. These qualifications will provide learners of Wales with a strong opportunity to thrive in the world of work we cannot yet fully imagine. The breadth of skills incorporated and the opportunities of learning about a range of histories, herstories, events and real-world issues, are refreshing, encouraging to see and purposeful. In our current global context of uncertainty, prioritising understanding and belonging, through learning about and with each other effectively, places our future generations in good stead; for a Wales where young people grow up knowing that their identities matter, their stories belong, and their futures are theirs to shape.

Owning diversity, inclusion and belonging is pivotal to ensuring the values of respect and acceptance are lived by. Whilst the new qualifications pose questions for educators and there are challenges to overcome, if we centre our learners, our societal values and ideals, the challenge of change will be more easily overcome. WJEC has and will continue to provide support mechanisms for stakeholders to help navigate through these times. Because at the end of the day, this isn't about qualifications alone. It's about creating a Wales where every learner feels seen, respected, and ready to thrive in a world we can't yet fully imagine.

That's a future worth building.

SECTION **04**

Working together to make a difference

Nurturing our **partnerships across Wales**

At WJEC, we believe that positive educational outcomes begin with strong relationships. Throughout 2024-25, our commitment to engagement has taken us across Wales, connecting directly with headteachers, teachers, lecturers, and learners. These connections form the foundation of our work, enabling us to develop qualifications and support that truly serve the educational community of Wales.

Our approach extends beyond formal meetings, seeking authentic dialogue helps us understand the real challenges faced in classrooms across Wales; this understanding allows us to provide targeted support where it matters most and ensures our qualifications remain accessible, inspirational, and inclusive for all learners.

Listening to the educational community and beyond

School and college visits remain central to our engagement strategy, providing direct insights into the classroom experiences that shape our qualification design and support. In 2024-25, these visits provided opportunities for meaningful conversations across Wales.

The visits throughout this past year provided valuable opportunities for dialogue. Our connections with headteachers, teachers and learners at Ysgol Penglais, Cardiff High School, Stanwell Comprehensive School, Caerleon Comprehensive School, Ysgol Maesydderwen, Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr, South Wales Learning Partnership – Secondary Heads Network and a meeting with Flintshire and Wrexham headteachers have directly informed our approach and support offerings. These face-to-face interactions help us understand how our qualifications are delivered in practice and allow us to address challenges directly.

Ian Morgan
Chief Executive, WJEC

Engaging with policymakers

Our engagement extended to policy-making circles, reflecting our commitment to transparency and comprehensive stakeholder involvement throughout the Made-for-Wales qualification development process. In October 2024, we delivered a Senedd Briefing to openly share our qualification and support developments with policymakers, actively seeking their feedback and insights. We followed this with a second Senedd Briefing in May 2025 ensuring government representatives remained fully informed as key stakeholders in this educational transformation.

Celebrating Welsh Culture at Eisteddfod yr Urdd and Genedlaethol

We were delighted to engage with hundreds of learners, parents and teachers at both Eisteddfod yr Urdd and Eisteddfod Genedlaethol, raising awareness of our qualifications and connecting with the Welsh-speaking community. Both celebratory events provided us with a unique opportunity to connect with the wider community in a less formal setting, demonstrating our active support for Welsh culture and language, while gathering insights in an environment that celebrates cultural achievements.

Looking forward

With ongoing developments and the current teaching of our first Wave of Made-for-Wales qualifications, maintaining connections with our educational community is vital. We remain committed to ensuring that schools and colleges across Wales are well-informed and prepared for this educational journey.

Mrs Lucy Purcell,
Headteacher,
Caerleon Comprehensive

The value of this engagement is reflected in feedback from school leaders. Mrs Lucy Purcell, Headteacher at Caerleon Comprehensive School, said:

“It was fantastic to be able to meet with Ian at our school to talk with him about the service we receive from WJEC. Ian was very open and honest, and we were able to discuss any issues we have faced, as well as the many examples where we feel the school has been well supported by the exam board. He engaged our learners really well and they found the discussion with him very insightful.

Celebrating Welsh Mathematicians

2024 Bursary Recipients

Now in its third year, the Gareth Pierce Bursary Scheme was established in 2022 in memory of our late Chief Executive. Annually, the scheme supports undergraduate students studying Mathematics through the medium of Welsh, providing each recipient with a £3,000 bursary. This initiative honours Gareth's passion for Mathematics and Statistics, as well as his dedicated advocacy for Welsh-medium education.

The Gareth Pierce Bursary continues to grow in popularity, and we are proud to announce our three newest recipients: Iwan Rhys Bryer, Siôn ap Llwyd Dafydd, both studying at Cardiff University and Jacob Matthew Redmond, an undergraduate student at Aberystwyth University.

"The Gareth Pierce bursary is now in its third year, and its growing popularity reflects Gareth's passion for Mathematics and learning through the medium of Welsh.

On behalf of WJEC, I would like to congratulate Jacob, Iwan and Siôn, who have been awarded this prestigious bursary. We wish them the very best in their studies, and hope the bursary enables them to thrive in their respective courses."

Ian Morgan
Chief Executive, WJEC

I am very proud that I can study part of my course through the medium of Welsh at Cardiff University in order to appeal to employers who desire bilingual skills. It is very important that I can study Mathematics through the medium of Welsh so I can build terminology and expertise in both languages. I am grateful to my teachers at Ysgol Bro Myrddin for inspiring me to study Mathematics at university, and to WJEC and the Coleg Cymraeg for the support.

Iwan Rhys Bryer
from Llanarthney, Carmarthenshire.

Find out more at:
www.wjec.co.uk/GarethPierceBursary

SECTION **05**

Recognising the next generation of innovators

Innovation Awards: Igniting Welsh young talent

For over two decades, the Innovation Awards has illuminated the creative brilliance of young Welsh inventors. This celebrated event continues our longstanding partnership with the Welsh Government to discover, showcase and nurture Wales' next generation of innovative thinkers.

Annually, these awards transform Cardiff Bay into a vibrant exhibition of ingenuity, where learners demonstrate that Welsh innovation — a tradition that gave the world the modern microphone, X-ray technology, and radar — remains in capable hands.

From concept to creation

The Innovation Awards provide an exceptional platform for Design and Technology learners at GCSE, AS and A Level to transform their classroom learning into practical, problem-solving designs. The competition encourages young people to identify real-world challenges and develop thoughtful, creative solutions.

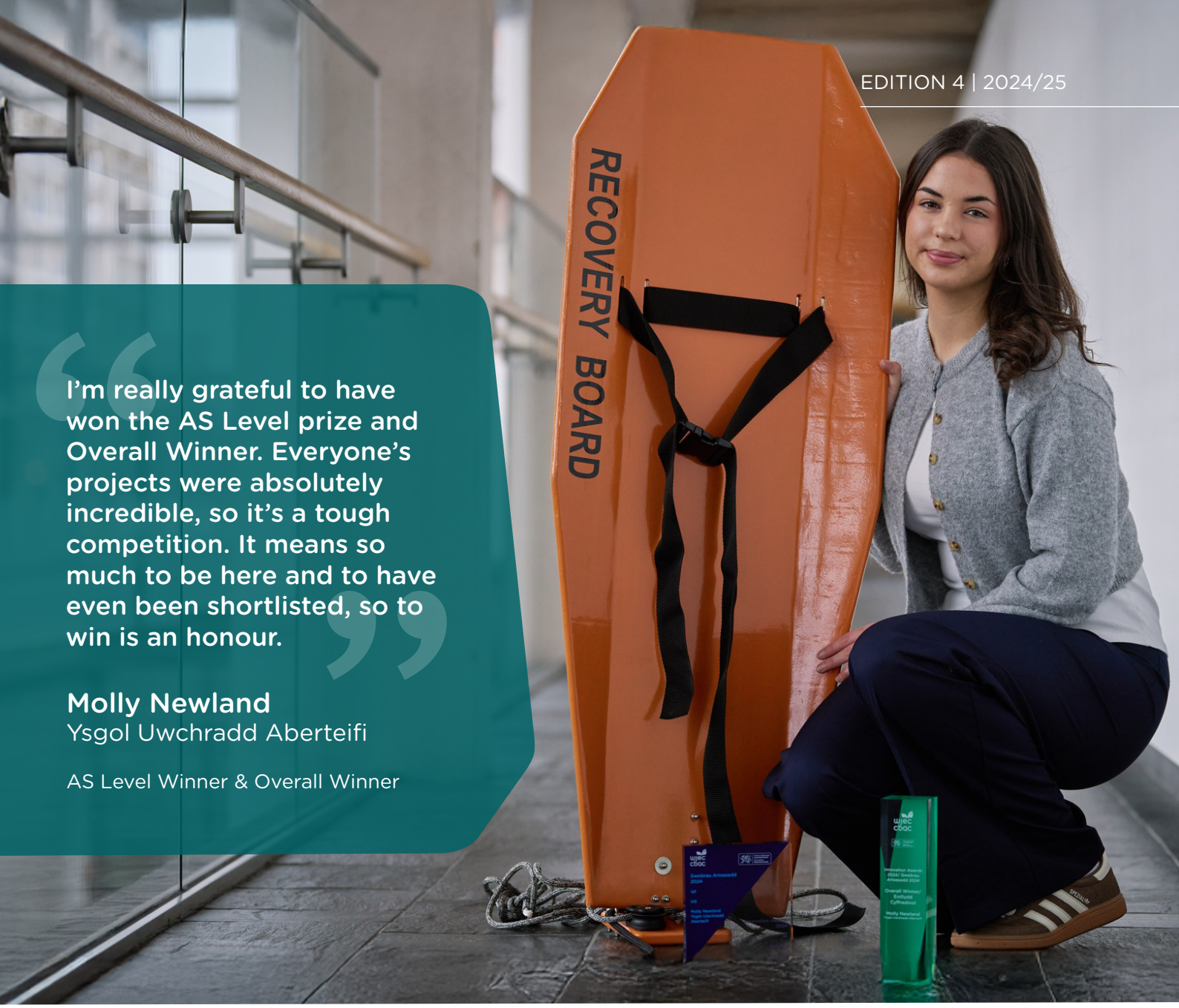
What makes these awards particularly special is seeing how learners embrace complex societal issues through design. Recent years have seen a remarkable focus on accessibility, sustainability, and improving quality of life for vulnerable populations — evidence that today's young inventors are designing with purpose and compassion.

Milestone celebration at the Senedd

The 24th annual ceremony, held on 12 December 2024 at the Senedd, welcomed talented young inventors from across Wales to showcase their groundbreaking designs. This prestigious Cardiff Bay venue provided a fitting backdrop for this special celebration of Welsh innovation.

> **This year's entries demonstrated exceptional creativity in addressing contemporary challenges. From emergency response tools to assistive technology for people with disabilities, the inventions showcased practical applications that could genuinely improve lives.**
>
> **The Innovation Awards is an important event in our calendar, and we view it as a privilege to celebrate our young Welsh talent as they continue the legacy of Welsh inventors. Once again, we have been overwhelmed with the standard of entries this year.**

Ian Morgan
Chief Executive, WJEC



> I'm really grateful to have won the AS Level prize and Overall Winner. Everyone's projects were absolutely incredible, so it's a tough competition. It means so much to be here and to have even been shortlisted, so to win is an honour.

Molly Newland
Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi

AS Level Winner & Overall Winner

A lifesaving innovation takes top honours

Molly Newland from Ysgol Uwchradd Aberteifi in Ceredigion won both the AS Level category and the prestigious Overall Winner title with her innovative rescue board design. The judges praised her thoughtful approach to improving emergency response tools, noting how she combined practicality with genuine lifesaving potential.

Other notable entries included: an accessible chess board for the partially sighted and blind, and a device providing relief for muscle cramps and spasms for people with Motor Neurone Disease —further evidence of how these young inventors are designing with empathy and understanding.

Building on success

The Innovation Awards continue to make a lasting impact on participants' futures. Previous winners have successfully developed their concepts into patented products, demonstrating how this platform can launch genuine innovation careers. Alys Jones, 2023's GCSE category winner, recently received an "Intention to Grant" notification from the UK Intellectual Property Office for her portable footrest device — an impressive achievement in the patent industry.

As we celebrate 24 years of the Innovation Awards, we look forward to continuing this tradition of nurturing Welsh creativity and seeing how today's young innovators will shape tomorrow's world.

For further information about the competition visit **www.wjec.co.uk/Innovations**

SECTION 06

Investing in our people and planet

ViewSonic
ViewSonic

Nurturing a culture of environmental awareness

As an organisation, we recognise the carbon footprint associated with our activities. This is why we are actively implementing new initiatives that not only reduce our overall environmental impact but foster a sustainable culture among our people.

Our journey towards Net Zero

The creation of environmental monitoring dashboards for our Western Avenue and Treforest sites marks a significant milestone in our sustainability journey.

These monitoring systems provide detailed visibility into our direct and indirect emissions and purchased energy, guiding our strategic path towards Net Zero by 2032.

Green Champions: Empowering environmental leadership

Our Green Champions Programme continues to strengthen, with 13 Environmental Champions currently undertaking our Sustainability qualification (pictured below). This initiative provides our team with foundational knowledge in sustainability, enabling them to expand their expertise through a recognised qualification.

Our Champions serve as internal advocates, implementing best practices and inspiring colleagues to embrace more sustainable behaviours across our operations. They also actively seek and suggest innovative sustainability ideas for WJEC to review and take forward, creating a valuable pipeline of environmental initiatives.

Reduction of gas usage **at our Treforest site by approximately 64,000 kWh through heating electrification - enough energy to heat 6 average UK schools for an entire winter** - representing a 45% decrease from our 2018/19 baseline.

Our electrical energy efficiency has improved by 33%, **from printing 56 to 74 A3 sheets of paper/ kWh of electricity — reducing our electricity consumption by 25% for every exam paper we produce, enough saved electricity to power computer suites in 20 schools for a full academic year.**

A substantial **£300,000 investment in intelligent lighting** systems across both our sites.

Key progress areas

Our sustainability initiatives continue to deliver meaningful results across multiple areas of our operations. **Highlights include:**

Renewable energy

We're proud to announce significant investments in on-site renewable energy generation, adding to our existing sustainability initiatives. Our Western Avenue site will soon feature a solar panel installation, representing a £98,000 investment in our clean energy future. The project will install 201 solar panels, generating 86 MWh of electricity annually - enough to power computers in 430 classrooms all year-round - while delivering CO2e savings of 17 tonnes per year, equivalent to taking 835 school bus journeys off the road.

Waste reduction

Our commitment to reducing waste has led to an innovative partnership with Manetti, which is focused on addressing the environmental impact of plastic bags used for exam papers. During 2024-25, we recycled almost 1 tonne of plastic through this programme — equivalent to 89,000 sandwich bags, enough to pack school lunches for nearly 500 learners for an entire academic year.

Supplier engagement

Recognising that our environmental footprint extends well beyond our direct operations, we have intensified engagement with our major suppliers regarding sustainable practices. This strategic dialogue focuses on understanding their emissions profiles, obtaining more accurate environmental data, and collaboratively identifying more sustainable alternatives for our supply chain.

> Since joining WJEC, I've been impressed by the organisation's proactive approach to sustainability. Our significant investments in reducing the carbon footprint of our facilities, combined with comprehensive emissions work with suppliers, demonstrate real commitment to environmental responsibility.
>
> From Director-level initiatives to our voluntary Environmental Green Champions driving shop-floor improvements, sustainability passion is evident throughout the organisation. It's exciting to be part of a company with such a clear environmental direction.

Warren Christy
Environmental,
Health & Safety Manager

Making a difference together

Our sustainability journey continues to gain momentum through strategic investments, innovative initiatives, and comprehensive emissions tracking.

The significant progress detailed in this report reflects our organisation-wide commitment to environmental responsibility and positions us firmly on the path to achieving our ambitious Net Zero emissions target by 2032.

By working together — across departments, with suppliers, and throughout our community — we are creating meaningful change that extends far beyond our immediate operations.

Learn more about our qualifications in sustainability at: **www.wjec.co.uk/Sustainability**

Leaders of Trusted Qualifications

All information correct at the time of publication: October 2025

WJEC CBAC Ltd
245 Western Ave,
Cardiff, CF5 2YX

T: 029 2026 5000
E: info@wjec.co.uk
W: www.wjec.co.uk

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