

# Quality and Standards in Post-16 Education and Training in Wales

## A REPORT ON THE QUALITY OF ADULT COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

in

### Rhondda Cynon Taf

By Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and  
Training in Wales

May 2005



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg  
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate  
for Education and Training in Wales



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- ▲ youth support services;
- ▲ LEAs;
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## Introduction

Adult community-based learning is defined as educational provision for adults made by:

- local authorities;
- voluntary organisations including the WEAs and YMCA Community College;
- further education colleges;
- higher education institutions;

and funded by:

- ELWa, the local authority and/or the National Assembly for Wales.

The definition includes learning which is funded by ELWa through the local authority, but delivered by a further education institution. It also includes learning which is funded by ELWa through the further education college, but delivered by the local authority.

Estyn considers provision from a learner's perspective. In line with this approach, the adult community-based learning inspections are conducted on the basis of the learning provision available to learners within a 'travel to learn' area. In most cases, this is a single local authority or CCET area. The inspection takes into account the developing network of adult community-based learning provision in the area. Some providers delivering adult community-based learning in the inspection area may also operate on a regional basis, providing a wide range of education and training. This activity remains outside the scope of the immediate inspection.

The adult community-based learning in Rhondda Cynon Taf was inspected as part of a six-year (2004-2010) national programme of inspections of all post-16 providers in Wales. The purpose of the programme is to identify good features and shortcomings of adult community-based learning in order that the providers may improve the quality of education and training offered and raise the standards achieved by learners. The outcomes of the inspection are intended to give learners more information about the quality of providers of adult community-based learning.

All inspections conducted under the arrangements apply the following principles:

- the use of a common inspection framework which is common to all sectors of education and training in Wales;
- an emphasis on the providers' evaluations of their work;
- the involvement of a provider nominee who works with the inspection team; and
- the inspection of a sample of provision.

Adult community-based learning inspections are conducted using an approach largely based on Estyn's area inspection protocols. This approach considers provision from a learner's perspective and also takes into account the network of provision available in an area.

This inspection took place from 16 May to 26 May 2005. A team of Her Majesty's Inspectors from Estyn, a statutory body independent of, but funded by, the Welsh Assembly Government, undertook the inspection. The team included HMI, additional inspectors and peer assessors released from other adult community-based learning providers in Wales.

The team has reported on standards achieved by learners, the quality of education and training provided, the quality of leadership and management and whether the providers deliver value for money.

The adult community-based learning inspection areas build on the new QCA/ACCAC<sup>1</sup> sector/subject areas and include:

- Adult Basic Education;
- Welsh for Adults;
- English for Speakers of Other Languages;
- Adult Learning; and
- Community Development.

Adult Learning encompasses all classes for adults delivered in the community. These include information communications technology, languages and art and design.

Community Development provision includes community projects such as Communities First and Learning Community Accounts.

The Estyn common inspection framework comprises seven key questions. These are set out on the contents page. For Key Question 1 of the common inspection framework, an overall grade is awarded across all providers. An overall grade is awarded also across the providers for each learning area. Individual providers are awarded a grade for this key question, for each learning area they deliver.

Each of Key Questions 2-7 is awarded an overall grade across all providers.

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<sup>1</sup> Qualifications and Curriculum Authority/Awdurdod Cymwysterau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru

## **Grade descriptors**

The five-point scale used to represent all inspection judgements in this report is as follows:

Grade 1	good with outstanding features
Grade 2	good features and no important shortcomings
Grade 3	good features outweigh shortcomings
Grade 4	some good features but shortcomings in important areas
Grade 5	many important shortcomings

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 requires the providers to prepare written statements of the actions that they propose to take to address the recommendations in the inspection report and the timescales for completing the proposed actions.

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## Context

### Geographic and demographic profile of Rhondda Cynon Taf

- 1 Rhondda Cynon Taf lies in the heart of South Wales, to the north of Cardiff. It covers an area of 424 square kilometres, and is the second largest local authority in Wales. The geography of the county borough is a mix of urban and rural communities, consisting of strings of villages along valley floors.
- 2 Traditionally, the area was dominated by coal mining and heavy industry and this legacy still shapes the region today. The area is now undergoing a major and rapid structural change away from heavy manufacturing industries, to a more diversified economy, based on smaller scale modern manufacturing and service industries.
- 3 At the 2001 Census, the population of Rhondda Cynon Taf was recorded as 231,946. This represents a decline from 1991, when the population stood at 232,593. Forty eight and a half per cent of the population is male. The area has an ageing population, but also a higher proportion of those aged 15 and under, than other parts of Wales. Just over a fifth of Rhondda Cynon Taf's population were aged 0 to 15 years and 16.28% were aged 65 or over. The average (mean) age of the population was 38.6 years.
- 4 There has been little change in the ethnic mix of Rhondda Cynon Taf since the 1991 Census, and in the 2001 census a small ethnic minority population of 1.1% was recorded.
- 5 The 2001 census showed that just over 40% of the population of Rhondda Cynon Taf had no qualifications compared to 33% in the whole of Wales. However, over 50% of the population in the three most deprived wards had no qualifications.
- 6 Only 9.8% of Rhondda Cynon Taf's population can speak, read and write Welsh compared with the average for Wales of 16.3%. Nearly 80% of the population have no knowledge of Welsh, compared to just over 70% for Wales as a whole.
- 7 Rhondda Cynon Taf suffers from high levels of economic and social deprivation. Thirty four of the 53 electoral divisions in the area are in the top third most deprived in Wales, accounting for two thirds of the total population of the area. Seventeen wards are in the top 100 most deprived in Wales. Whilst the southern area of the county borough is the most economically and socially healthy, pockets of deprivation are still found there.

## The nature of the providers

- 8 The main providers<sup>2</sup> of adult community-based learning in the area of Rhondda Cynon Taf are:
- Coleg Morgannwg;
  - Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council;
  - Workers Educational Association (South);
  - The YMCA Community College;
  - University of Glamorgan; and
  - Interlink.
- 9 Coleg Morgannwg is the main provider of adult community-based learning. The college directly delivers 38% of the adult community-based learning activities in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This represents 40% of the adults participating in these activities. The college policy is to offer accreditation for all the courses it delivers in the community. The college delivers learning activities at over 100 venues throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf. Seventy per cent of these learning activities are delivered in Community First areas.
- 10 The College also works with a number of franchise<sup>3</sup> partners, including Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Valleys Kids, to deliver a further 49% of the learning activities offered in the area. This represents a further 53% of the adults participating in adult community-based learning activities.
- 11 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has created a network of learning centres in community settings and also delivers its own programme of adult community-based learning, including non-accredited adult learning. This programme includes adult learning activities delivered via its community arts and museum programmes. The borough council's library service delivers a range of ICT learning activities. Its economic regeneration department contributes to the planning arrangements for adult community-based learning in Community First areas.
- 12 The Workers Educational Association (WEA) (South) - offers adult community-based learning activities in a range of community settings across Rhondda Cynon Taf. Fifty seven classes were running during the period of the inspection. The WEA (South) works with the local authority and Coleg Morgannwg to jointly deliver LearnDirect<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Figures quoted in this section are based on adult community-based learning LLWR 2003/2004 data for the Rhondda Cynon Taf area as produced by ELWa.

<sup>3</sup> Under the college's franchise arrangements, it works in partnership with other providers who deliver provision on behalf of the college.

<sup>4</sup> LearnDirect is an organisation that provides flexible on-line training opportunities via a network of on-line learning centres in Wales, England and Northern Ireland.

courses. Also, the WEA (South) works with the University of Glamorgan and the University of Wales, Newport to provide Progression through Partnership<sup>5</sup>.

- 13 The YMCA Community College organises a small range of courses in partnership with the management committee at Hirwaun YMCA. The YMCA Community College also works occasionally with community organisations to deliver bespoke learning activities.
- 14 The University of Glamorgan offers a wide range of Welsh for Adults provision, including courses leading to higher levels of learning.
- 15 Interlink is the County Voluntary Council (CVC) for Rhondda Cynon Taf. Interlink is not a provider of learning opportunities in the same way as the traditional providers of learning. The CVC helps voluntary or community-based organisations to make links with learning providers and enables these organisations to organise their own learning programmes. Since 2002, Interlink has employed a Communities First training officer who co-ordinates the provision of learning activities to help communities build up their capacity to participate in regeneration processes and programmes; to devise community learning plans; and to organise learning events based on the outcomes of survey work.

### **Learning Areas**

- 16 In this inspection we inspected provision in the following learning areas:
  - Adult Basic Education (ABE) including English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Family Learning;
  - Welsh for Adults;
  - Adult Learning (including Information Communications Technology (ICT), Languages and Art and Design); and
  - Community Development.

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<sup>5</sup> A partnership between the University of Wales, Newport, the University of Glamorgan and the Workers Educational Association (South) to help people to progress to higher levels of learning in their own community.

- 17 Each provider offers a different mix of these learning areas. The following table shows the learning areas offered by each provider and included in the inspection:

<b>Provider</b>	<b>ABE (including ESOL and Family Learning<sup>6</sup>)</b>	<b>Welsh for Adults</b>	<b>Adult Learning</b>	<b>Community Development</b>
<b>Coleg Morgannwg</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council</b>	✓		✓	✓
<b>WEA(South)</b>			✓	✓
<b>YMCA Community College</b>		✓	✓	
<b>Interlink</b>				✓
<b>University of Glamorgan</b>		✓		

<sup>6</sup> Family Learning in Rhondda Cynon Taf is delivered via a partnership between Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Coleg Morgannwg. Family Learning forms a significant part of the Basic Skills provision in the county borough and its success is dependent upon the contribution made by each partner. Thus a separate grade has been awarded to Family Learning and attributed to both partners.

## Summary

### Table of grades awarded

18 The inspection team judged the providers' work as follows:

<b>Key question</b>	<b>Grade</b>
1 How well do learners achieve?	<b>1</b>
2 How effective are teaching, training and assessment?	<b>2</b>
3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?	<b>3</b>
4 How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	<b>2</b>
5 How effective are leadership and strategic management?	<b>3</b>
6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?	<b>3</b>
7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?	<b>3</b>

## Standards

### Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

19 Overall, learners' standards of achievement in the sessions inspected are as follows:

Learners' standards of achievement	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	26%	62%	9%	3%	0%

20 The standards achieved in each of the learning areas inspected are as follows:

Learning area inspected	Inspection grade
ABE (including Esol and Family Learning)	1
Welsh for Adults	3
Adult Learning	1
Community Development	2

21 Many learners achieve their agreed learning goals and attain a range of certification. They make very good progress in their learning and they often evaluate their progress against their own personal targets. Learners make good progress in a range of subjects and gain a good knowledge of Welsh contemporary issues. Learners are very well motivated and enthusiastic and make great efforts to participate in learning, often in the face of difficult personal circumstances. Many learners progress to higher levels of learning and many others participate in new areas of learning at similar levels. Learners develop good personal, social and learning skills and use their skills in other aspects of their lives. Many learners have improved their capacity to play an active role in the development of their communities.

## The quality of education and training

### Key question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

The quality of teaching in the learning areas inspected	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
	17%	65%	16%	3%	0%

In charts where percentages have been rounded up to the nearest whole number, they might not add up to 100.

- 22 Teaching, training and assessment are effective across all of the provision. The majority of teaching is of a high quality, incorporating a range of learning activities. The majority of tutors provide well structured course and session plans and well prepared teaching files. Learning objectives are clear, concise and thoroughly planned.
- 23 Most tutors delivering accredited courses use assessment criteria effectively to help learners measure their progress. The high quality of planning for accredited courses has a positive impact on the learners' achievements.

- 24 Many tutors provide good support to learners and ensure that they take part fully in activities. The majority of tutors motivate learners and plan a range of activities to ensure that all learners can join in at their own level.
- 25 A very few tutors, however, have not planned well. They have not set aims and objectives for their learners. Neither do they effectively assess learners' understanding and progression or involve learners in the assessment process. This is particularly so in non-accredited classes.
- 26 Most tutors provide their learners with immediate, constructive, verbal feedback within sessions. However, only a minority provide evaluative written feedback on learners' files.
- 27 Very few tutors provide bilingual opportunities for learners. However, there are good examples of the use of the Welsh dimension to contextualise work.

**Key Question 3: How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?**

- 28 Learning providers offer a very wide range of courses across an extensive geographical area. These include non-accredited courses, and also classes where learners can gain qualifications, mainly through the Open College Network<sup>7</sup>. The provision of adult community-based learning in dedicated centres within local communities helps adults to learn in their own locality. However, some centres have a limited choice of subjects or courses at any one time.
- 29 The overall curriculum provides flexible patterns of provision to meet the needs of learners. However, in the case of four providers, 50% of the provision is ICT related and there is often duplication of provision for ICT within some communities. Few centres successfully sustain provision throughout the year and most classes cease during the summer months.
- 30 Many learning providers have a clear view of adult learning needs and Welsh Assembly Government priorities for social inclusion, equal opportunities and sustainable development. Learning providers often target courses at economically and socially disadvantaged communities and organise classes for learners with particular needs such as mental health and stroke sufferers.
- 31 Learning providers are committed at an operational level to planning and collaborative working across the area. However, learning providers have not formed strategic partnerships and do not plan together strategically for the delivery of adult community-based learning across the area.

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<sup>7</sup> The Open College Network provides accreditation services for adult community-based learning providers. The National Open College Network is the central organisation for 23 Open College networks across the UK and provides national qualifications and programmes in a wide range of subjects including the recognition of achievement through the award of credit.

#### **Key Question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?**

- 32 Learning providers in Rhondda Cynon Taf offer effective guidance and support which helps learners to make informed choices about their learning. Learners can get further advice and guidance from tutors and student services. Learners are aware of their rights, complaints procedures, and opportunities for accreditation, the support available to them, health and safety issues, their programme of study, financial matters and progression opportunities.
- 33 In most cases, tutors are very aware of their learners' needs and know their abilities and personal circumstances. There is good support for adults who have additional needs and specialist services are available. Learning providers co-ordinate referrals from Social Services, and learners with physical and learning disabilities are placed on courses according to their needs.
- 34 The quality of induction processes varies across the area according to the provider and the nature of the provision. Most tutors use induction criteria and a check list to ensure that each learner is properly inducted and provided with all relevant information. A few tutors do not use induction criteria and a few do not know about progression opportunities and support mechanisms for learners.
- 35 The majority of providers have policies and procedures in place for the protection of vulnerable adults. Tutors are given clear guidance about how to identify and respond to potentially abusive situations and the procedure for reporting incidences of abuse. Almost three quarters of the tutors observed had undergone a check by the criminal records bureau. This compares well with the number of tutors who had undergone this process in other areas inspected during this cycle.

#### **The quality of leadership and management**

#### **Key Question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?**

- 36 The Community Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf is called A Better Life<sup>8</sup>. The plan identifies Learning for Growth as a key strategic priority for the area. Bro Dysg<sup>9</sup> is a strategic partnership which brings together a range of public, private and voluntary sector bodies with an interest in education and training. This partnership is charged with the responsibility of taking this priority forward. Bro Dysg facilitates a range of working groups that help set priorities for the partnership. However, strategic planning has not yet fully encompassed adult community-based learning, neither have systems been put in place to monitor its impact.
- 37 Leaders and managers of individual providers take good account of the priorities of the Community Plan and ELWa's Regional Statement of Needs and Priorities in setting priorities and objectives for their own institutions. Community First training partnerships have begun to develop community learning plans which inform adult

<sup>8</sup> A Better Life – the Community Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf: Prepared by the Better Life Consortium – a partnership of public, voluntary and private sector organisations.

<sup>9</sup> Bro Dysg is a partnership comprising representatives from the statutory, voluntary and private sectors. The partnership, which incorporates the CCET, is tasked with providing strategic direction for education and training in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

community-based learning in around half of the Communities First areas in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

- 38 Leaders and managers are generally well informed about whether or not their own institution is meeting its targets and goals. Coleg Morgannwg has a good management information system in place that informs the planning of the provision it delivers directly, but which does not include the provision it delivers through its partners. Not all providers use management information and performance monitoring effectively.

**Key Question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve standards?**

- 39 Overall, learning providers are making good progress in their own institutions in developing a systematic approach to the management of quality and standards. Managers are well informed about the performance of the areas for which they are responsible and they are making good use of this information to plan and improve the quality of provision. However, there is undue variation in the extent and effectiveness of quality assurance systems across providers and in the provision Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council delivers on behalf of Coleg Morgannwg.
- 40 The majority of learning providers are implementing effective systems for gathering performance information through classroom observation. Nonetheless, in some areas of provision, lead tutors are not directly involved in classroom observation. Their subject specialisms are not used to the full to gain information on the progress learners make in specific subjects.
- 41 Learning providers have appropriate arrangements for recording the findings of classroom observations and providing feedback to tutors. This is particularly so in relation to the quality of lesson planning and delivery. However, there is variation in the extent to which observation records focus on learners and their progress.
- 42 Tutors participate in systems of peer observation across learning areas. This provides tutors with useful opportunities to observe their peers. Tutors value the opportunities this brings for professional development. Nevertheless, peer observation is currently not feeding into self-assessment processes.
- 43 Providers' self-assessment reports are evaluative documents which provide useful information on aspects of provision. Most self-assessment reports have helpful Quality Development Plans that link well with the areas for development identified in the self-assessment reports. However, self-assessment reports do not make enough use of performance information, data analysis or the outcomes of classroom observations.

**Key question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?**

- 44 Many of the staff in adult community-based learning are qualified to occupational standards. All individual learning providers have good staff development policies and strategies that help tutors to acquire the appropriate qualifications. However,

providers are not working together to plan strategically to ensure that all tutors are qualified to occupational standards.

- 45 Learners' access to adult community-based learning is very good as venues are well distributed across the area. Accommodation is generally of a good quality and suitable for the needs of adult learners. Overall, venues offer good access to ICT. Learning providers have not worked together to determine a strategic plan for the use of all the available accommodation within their control.
- 46 Many tutors develop resources and learning aids to meet the specific needs and interests of learners in their class. However, a very few learners with specific additional or special learning needs reported that learning aids which would help them fully participate in learning have not been made available.
- 47 All providers have effective systems for allocating and monitoring resources. However, systems for allocating funds for adult community-based learning in the area are rooted in historical practices for financing provision. Learning providers have not worked together to develop a strategic approach to the provision of adult community-based learning. This hinders them in making best use of the available resources in Rhondda Cynon Taf in order to secure value for money. The learning providers have not made use of community planning processes to identify the total available resources, prioritise expenditure and maximise opportunities to secure other funding.

**Standards achieved by learners in the learning areas inspected**

**Summary of Grades by Learning Areas**

Provider	ABE (including ESOL and Family Learning)	Welsh for Adults	Adult Learning	Community Development
Coleg Morgannwg	1	3	1	2
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	1 <sup>10</sup>		2	2
WEA (South)			2	2
YMCA Community College <sup>11</sup>				
University of Glamorgan		1		
Interlink				2

- 48 In **Adult Basic Education**, the majority of learners work to appropriate and relevant targets which are set at a challenging level. Learners' knowledge of literacy, numeracy and IT is developed and extended through a range of stimulating and meaningful activities. The majority of learners know what they want to achieve and make good progress towards their targets. In most ABE classes, learners make good progress with reading, writing and numeracy. Learners often progress to classes in other learning areas to further widen their learning experiences. There is evidence of good progression by learners in family learning classes onto further courses, employment and school involvement.
- 49 Many of the learners who enrol on an ABE course benefit from the support and encouragement they receive from staff. This helps them to remain engaged in learning. Learners transfer the skills that they gain into everyday situations and use them to gain employment.
- 50 In **Welsh for Adults**, learners achieve standards that are good in a high proportion of classes. In around a quarter of the classes, learners make very good progress. However, the progress learners make varies unduly across classes. In classes where achievements are good, learners use Welsh spontaneously when talking with each other or with their teacher. Advanced learners are able to use the short forms of the past tense of the verb correctly and with ease, and make good progress in

<sup>10</sup> Family Learning in Rhondda Cynon Taf is delivered via a partnership between Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Coleg Morgannwg. Family Learning forms a significant part of the Basic Skills provision in the county borough and its success is dependent upon the contribution made by each partner. Grade 1 has been awarded to Family Learning and attributed to both partners.

<sup>11</sup> A small number of classes managed by the YMCA were included within the inspection. However they did not provide a large enough sample to award a grade for any single learning area. Comments relating to the classes are provided in the text of the report.

their ability to offer extended responses. Learners become increasingly capable of sustaining interactions in pairs and small groups.

- 51 In the classes where progress is less evident, learners cope with using Welsh within the structured tasks they are given. However, they do not make sufficient use of language previously learnt to engage in interactions. They make little progress in extending their responses and show little signs of using Welsh spontaneously.
- 52 Learners across all classes show good levels of commitment and perseverance. They complete their tasks and are eager to improve their ability to speak Welsh.
- 53 In many classes visited during the inspection, attendance on the day of the visit was only between a third and a half of the learners on the register. This is low, even allowing for the impact of the summer term.
- 54 In **Adult Learning** most learners attain very good standards of knowledge, understanding and skill in their respective courses. Learners in most classes are developing in confidence and competence. Most learners make very good progress in learning. Many attain accreditation and then progress either to higher level courses or others at a similar level, to improve on their knowledge, understanding and skills. For example, learners undertaking ICT, art, and health related courses often progress to higher level activities or study a new topic at the same level. Learners often evaluate their progress against personal targets. In the most successful classes, learners work well on their own with little help needed from the tutor.
- 55 Learners respond willingly to tasks and assignments. They identify and attain personal targets within good timescales. There are good standards of problem solving, and learners work effectively as individuals, in groups and in teams.
- 56 In **Community Development** learners achieve good standards. They attend sessions regularly and most complete their programmes of learning. They are well motivated and develop a good range of skills. Learners engage in a variety of programmes at a range of levels including crafts, parenting skills or projects that help older learners use their life experience to create living histories of their community. There are a few examples of learners progressing onto more demanding or advanced programmes. One learner who began on a Next Steps programme at entry level is now completing a degree level course.
- 57 Learners talk enthusiastically about how their learning has helped them to develop self confidence and to recognise their potential. The self esteem and confidence that learners gain through participating in programmes helps them to use the skills they acquire in a way that benefits the community. A few learners identified that there are increased job opportunities available to them as a result of the skills that they have learned.
- 58 However, on a few programmes, learners do not have clear learning plans and are not always sure about what skills they are expected to gain on completion of the whole programme, or of their overall goals. Learners on a few programmes are not sufficiently informed of how they could advance their skills further once they have completed their programme of learning.

## Recommendations

59 In order to build on the strengths of the adult community-based learning provision, the providers should work together to address all the recommendations identified in this report. In particular learning providers should:

R1 develop strategic planning for adult community-based learning to:

- establish priorities;
- plan for the delivery of the curriculum at community level;
- improve the availability of support for additional learning needs and the geographical spread of childcare provision;
- organise the use of venues and facilities to achieve the best fit for the area; and
- achieve value for money in the use of available resources;

R2 improve the range of courses available to:

- rationalise ICT provision and ensure that LearnDirect is used to meet the needs of learners;
- increase the number of male learners;
- ensure provision of learning opportunities throughout the year;
- increase learning opportunities for healthy lifestyles, diet and fitness; and
- increase opportunities for bilingual learning.

R3 make sure that all partners can make best use of opportunities to support those learners with basic skills needs;

R4 improve session planning across all learning providers to include specific aims and objectives and ensure that learners are clear about their learning goals;

- R5 improve procedures for learner assessment across all learning providers including:
- initial and continuous assessment;
  - opportunities for learners to reflect upon their learning and assess themselves; and
  - evaluative verbal and written feedback.
- R6 improve the monitoring, tracking and recording of achievement in non-accredited provision to help learners recognise their achievements and, where appropriate, increase opportunities for accrediting learning outcomes;
- R7 strengthen induction procedures to ensure that all tutors are fully aware of induction criteria and processes and progression opportunities within and across providers;
- R8 help all learners to understand how they can use their learning to benefit their community and develop better links with employers to support learners aiming to return to employment;
- R9 improve the use of the available information for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness and quality of adult community-based learning and to make comparisons between providers; and
- R10 apply quality assurance systems more consistently within and across providers and develop common principles across all providers for quality assurance and standards.

## Standards

### Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

##### Success in achieving agreed learning goals

- 60 Many learners achieve their agreed learning goals and attain a range of certification in all areas of adult community-based learning. In Adult Basic Education and Adult Learning the majority of learners know what they want to achieve and how to go about getting there. Most learners attain very good standards of knowledge, understanding and skill in their respective courses. They often evaluate their progress against personal targets and, in the most successful cases, they develop as effective independent learners.
- 61 Learners make good progress in a range of subjects including the arts, crafts, ABE, Welsh for Adults, Modern Languages, ICT, beauty therapy, cookery and woodwork and they gain a good knowledge of Welsh contemporary issues.
- 62 In ABE, learners have a well developed knowledge of literacy, numeracy and ICT. In many ICT related courses, learners gain a good range of outcomes and their level of ICT skills is very good overall.
- 63 The ISR statistics for 2002/2003<sup>12</sup> for all learning areas demonstrate that the attainment of most learners is above national comparators. The statistics show also that a significant number of learners, in all learning areas, achieve their qualification aims. Many learners both complete their courses and achieve a qualification. Thus, statistics for successful completion are above national comparators, although the number of learners who complete courses in Welsh for Adults do not compare well with national statistics. Learners in Family Learning have maintained a consistently high attainment level which is almost double the national comparator.

##### Progress in learning

- 64 Many learners have no previous qualifications and express negative views of previous experience of learning. Nevertheless, they make good progress against set targets.
- 65 Many learners progress to higher levels of learning and there are a few good examples of learners progressing from entry level to achieving degree level qualifications. Many Welsh for Adult learners in particular progress to higher education. Many learners also participate in new areas of learning at similar levels. This broadens their range of achievements, understanding and skills. A significant number participate in the Glamorgan Summer School and progress to mainstream

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<sup>12</sup> ELWa's Individualised Student Record - See Appendix 2 Data and statistics: Explanatory note.

college courses. Many also progress into employment or become involved in the life of their community.

### **Development of personal, social and learning skills**

- 66 Learners are very well motivated and enthusiastic and make great efforts to participate in learning, often in the face of difficult personal circumstances. They consistently say that participation in learning has developed their self-esteem and confidence which has helped them to acquire skills relevant to other aspects of their lives.
- 67 Many learners improve their capacity to participate in the development of their communities and contribute to community life and activity. A few have improved their abilities to support their children to learn. Other groups of learners were using new skills to develop their role in community groups or to support hobbies.

#### Using new skills

A group of mature learners, who previously felt that they were not able to understand new technology, had gained skills and were working towards six qualifications in ICT. These learners consider that the courses had opened up a whole new world for them and half the group had purchased laptops. The group members are using their ICT skills to produce material for use in their community and to support new hobbies. One member of the group is researching local history and using her skills to restore old photographs. Two other members are tracing their family tree and are using the internet to acquire data and information about their family history.

- 68 Learners from a variety of backgrounds participate in learning activities and derive personal and social benefits from their participation. Some have returned to learning following an illness or to alleviate health problems. Others, with learning difficulties, make very good progress and become involved in vocational initiatives. Older people make good use of learning activities to work alongside others and adults with young families use their learning to enhance family life. Many work well together in groups and in teams.

## The quality of education and training

### Key Question 2: How effective are teaching, training and assessment?

#### Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings

- 69 Teaching, training and assessment are good across all of the provision. The majority of teaching is of a high quality incorporating a range of effective approaches. Most tutors create a learning environment that fosters and develops learners' confidence and has a positive impact on their learning. They provide support to learners and show sensitivity towards their ability levels, taking good account of their individual needs. Most tutors promote good relationships with learners and extend their learning and understanding. Tutors provide a high level of individual attention for learners and work with them to agree appropriate learning objectives and goals.
- 70 The majority of tutors provide well structured course and session plans and well prepared teaching files. Learning objectives are clear, concise and thoroughly planned. Tutors plan a variety of activities for learners, based on the objectives of their Individual Learning Plans. The majority of tutors motivate learners and help them to set their own targets and achieve their goals. Tutors challenge learners and help them to extend their knowledge, skills and understanding and to develop into independent learners.

#### Effective Teaching

In one ABE session, the teaching is very effectively planned and organised to offer a variety of different learning activities.

The tutor adapts work to meet the objectives of the learning plans of individual learners.

The tutor supports the learners effectively on a one-to-one basis and uses a good range of well-prepared materials to support learning.

The tutor marks learners' work regularly and systematically; gives constructive feedback; and encourages learners to assess themselves. The learners achieve a variety of accredited units to a good standard.

- 71 Tutors use a variety of learning activities to help learners progress. These include the use of contemporary case studies, local history and extra-curricular activities. In a few cases, tutors organise the publication of learners' work and opportunities for performance. In Welsh for Adults classes, tutors ensure that learners take advantage of opportunities to use the target language in a natural setting and plan opportunities for learners to converse with Welsh speakers living in the area.

- 72 Most tutors assess learners continuously in individual sessions and throughout their course. Many have effective assessment procedures and systems which make good use of criteria to assess learners and record their achievement.
- 73 A few tutors provide good support for key skills in the planning and delivery of subject specific activities.

Integrating key skills support

In a Next Steps session, informal methods are used well to integrate key skills. The tutor uses flag making as an activity to introduce the use of number, ICT, communication, basic Welsh and the Cwricwlwm Cymreig. The tutor helps learners to research flag design using the internet.

The tutor uses a good range of activities to accommodate the variety of interests within the group.

The tutor has helped learners to research and set up a summer playscheme in the community. Learners have researched the Care Standards and Health and Hygiene requirements and progressed to achieve CACHE2 and First Aid qualifications.

Assessment is conducted well and outcomes reinforce the sense of achievement and pride learners have of their work. Learners' achievements are recorded effectively and constructive feedback is given to learners.

- 74 Tutors plan for the delivery of accredited courses very effectively. The high quality of this planning has a positive impact on the knowledge, skills and understanding gained by learners and many learners progress to higher level courses.
- 75 A very few tutors, however, have not planned well. They have not set aims and objectives for their learners. Neither do they effectively assess learners' understanding and progression. This is particularly so in non-accredited classes.
- 76 Few tutors provide learners with the opportunity to self-assess, or involve them in the assessment process through reflective practice. In a few sessions, tutors miss the opportunity to accredit learning outcomes and assessment of learning is irregular and restricted in a few other examples.
- 77 In a significant minority of Welsh for Adults sessions, tutors do not plan according to the language ability of learners. The exercises provided are set at too low a level to extend their language abilities. In a few examples, tutors do not use the target language sufficiently nor use audio-visual aids effectively.
- 78 Most tutors across all learning areas provide their learners with immediate, constructive, verbal feedback. However, only a minority provide evaluative written feedback on learners' files.

- 79 There is no policy in place to offer Welsh medium or bilingual teaching in course delivery and very few tutors provide bilingual opportunities for learners. Nor do learning providers identify courses that could be delivered either bilingually or through the medium of Welsh. However, there are good examples of the use of the Welsh dimension to contextualise work.

**Key Question 3: How well do learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community?**

**Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

- 80 Learning providers in Rhondda Cynon Taf offer a very wide range of courses across an extensive geographical area. Classes are organised in art and crafts, Modern Languages Welsh for Adults Adult Basic Education, English for Speakers of Other Languages, sign language, digital photography, patchwork quilting, beauty, and cookery. This provision includes non-accredited courses, and also classes where learners can gain qualifications, mainly through the Open College Network<sup>13</sup>. Learning providers offer opportunities across the area for learners to progress from entry level to level 3. A range of courses is organised for learners with particular needs such as mental health and stroke sufferers and adults with learning difficulties.
- 81 Most providers organise an extensive range of ICT related classes. In four of the providers, nearly 50% of their provision is ICT related. On occasion, there is unnecessary and inefficient duplication of ICT provision within the same community.
- 82 Many providers have a clear view of adults' learning needs and Welsh Assembly Government priorities for social inclusion, equal opportunities and sustainable development. Classes are organised in many locations across the area and are often targeted at economically and socially disadvantaged communities. The provision of adult community-based learning in dedicated centres within local communities enables adults to learn in their own locality. This helps adults who may lack the resources or confidence to travel a long distance back into learning. Nevertheless, some centres have a narrow choice of subjects or courses at any one time.
- 83 The overall curriculum provides flexible patterns of provision to meet the needs of learners. This includes daytime and evening classes, as well as weekend courses, taster courses, a summer school, e-learning through LearnDirect, and more regular provision lasting from 10 to 32 weeks a year. In some cases, providers offer a range of visits and other extra curricular activities to develop confidence and consolidate learning, for example trips to art exhibitions and the theatre and European exchanges.
- 84 However, few centres successfully sustain provision throughout the year and most classes cease during the summer months. There is little co-ordinated planning between providers to ensure a basic entitlement of courses for learners throughout

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<sup>13</sup> The Open College Network in Wales provides services for adult community-based learning providers. It helps learners to access a wide range of programmes, including those leading to national qualifications and those leading to the award of credit. The National Open College Network offers this service through 23 Open College networks across the UK.

the year and across the area. This lack of continuity of classes has an adverse effect on the overall attainment of learners, such as in Modern Foreign Languages and Welsh for Adults, where regular immersion in the language over a sustained period of time is beneficial to learning.

- 85 There are appropriate courses in basic skills and vocational courses for those with additional learning needs and some providers place a strong emphasis on integrating key skills into other learning. There are encouraging initiatives to support young families in gaining parenting skills within the Community First programme. Many learners, particularly those on Family Learning programmes, are aware of the progression routes that are available to them. There is successful targeting of male learners by a minority of providers, though a significantly lower proportion of men attend adult community-based learning courses overall. There are few links with employers to support learners aiming to return to employment.
- 86 A number of taster classes on Healthy Living are organised during Healthy Living week. This is an important initiative, but provision is relatively small in scale and unduly limited in scope. The delivery of courses and activities that promote healthy living and fitness are not co-ordinated across the area.
- 87 All the learning providers work well together to sustain a variety of partnerships. They have a commitment at an operational level to collaborative working across the area. For example, Interlink works with Community First partnership boards to prepare community learning plans in collaboration with a range of learning providers. The University of Glamorgan and WEA (South) work well together to provide progression opportunities for learners. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council works with the WEA (South) to deliver LearnDirect courses and with Coleg Morgannwg to deliver Family Learning. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council also works with Cyfanfyd<sup>14</sup> to provide a series of workshops throughout the year aimed at helping tutors to integrate global citizenship and sustainability into the delivery of their lessons. The sessions are open to any provider from Rhondda Cynon Taf.

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<sup>14</sup> Cyfanfyd is a national membership organisation working to promote education for global citizenship in Wales. Cyfanfyd supports organisations working in all fields of education helping them to incorporate a global dimension into their work.

Effective  
operational  
partnerships

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Coleg Morgannwg work well together to provide a range of learning activities for adults with learning difficulties. Staff from the two organisations work well with a variety of other agencies from the statutory and voluntary sectors, via a formal consortium. They take referrals and create a range of learning activities appropriate to the needs of individuals. These activities help people to progress in their learning.

Coleg Morgannwg and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council plan the delivery of activities together in order to offer a seamless service to learners. Activities include cookery, crafts, and ICT and money skills. The consortium has also established a crafts and coffee shop that provides vocational experience for 10 learners. Courses are delivered on main college sites and in venues in the community such as leisure centres.

Thus the consortium can help learners progress from courses in the community to higher level provision at the college. Learners also hear about facilities, such as leisure centres, that are available to them within the community. All classes are accredited and 89% of the learners achieve credit.

Learners are often referred to other providers if the consortium is unable to provide for their needs. For example, four groups of learners are now learning with the WEA (South) as neither the college nor the borough council could fund classes for their particular range of needs.

- 88 However, learning providers have not formed strategic partnerships. Thus they are unable to plan for the delivery of the adult community-based learning curriculum across the area, to maximise opportunities and avoid duplication. Nor do they monitor the quality of the curriculum to meet the needs of learners across the area better.
- 89 The Older People's Strategy<sup>15</sup> has a good infrastructure to consult older people on their learning needs. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has set up three local fora that bring together representatives of older people. The fora have contributed to the development of an adult community-based learning curriculum for older people. The curriculum includes ICT courses that are relevant to the needs of older learners such as digital photography and email. Health related courses are also delivered to older learners. Older learners have also been involved in a trans-national project, involving five countries in order to carry forward the older learners' agenda. An 'Action Planning for Older Learners Group' has been established that includes older learners and organisations and learning providers in

<sup>15</sup> Older people's strategy: The Welsh Assembly Government has developed a strategy for older people that was launched in January 2003. It provides a framework for all statutory bodies in Wales to plan for an ageing society and improve services for older people. Local Authorities have a responsibility to take the strategy for older people forward at a local level.

Rhondda Cynon Taf. The borough council has also undertaken two consultation events with older people that feed into the Bro Dysg strategy.

- 90 Some tutors make good use of artefacts, Welsh cultural traditions and contemporary images of Wales to inform learners of their heritage. The provision of Welsh for Adults in employment settings is an initiative that helps learners develop bilingual skills in vocational settings.
- 91 LearnDirect provision offers appropriate opportunities for adults to access e-learning. This improves the potential for flexibility and breadth within the adult community-based learning curriculum. Learners develop good ICT skills and there are plans to incorporate business-related modules within the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council staff development programme. However a lack of programme co-ordination sometimes prevents learners from accessing the resources from LearnDirect that are most appropriate to their needs, and from linking with other types of classes.

#### **Key question 4: How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?**

<b>Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings</b>
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- 92 Learning providers in Rhondda Cynon Taf offer effective guidance and support that helps learners to make informed choices about the courses they enrol on. Providers market some courses locally; other courses are also advertised throughout the Rhondda Cynon Taf area. This includes leaflets, posters, local brochures and local newspapers. Marketing material is effective in publicising courses, but in many cases, demand is created by word of mouth from satisfied learners who attend courses regularly. Providers also organise publicity road shows, open days and use fairs and exhibitions to publicise their courses directly to learners. Comprehensive brochures advertise the provision over larger areas and learners can access provider websites. Voluntary organisations and community groups inform providers regarding individual and community learning needs.
- 93 Learners seeking advice and guidance about their initial choice of course can find this by contacting a provider and student services personnel. Most tutors offer pre-course advice during induction and make every effort to channel learners into the appropriate course. Overall this system works well, however there are a few tutors who lack enough knowledge about accreditation. Similarly, tutors' knowledge of the courses offered by other learning providers is often limited. In a few of the providers, career advice is provided by specialists, as well as tutors, and careers officers are invited to talk to groups or individuals. A few of the learners interviewed have benefited from advice sessions with careers officers.
- 94 All learning providers make every effort to ensure ease of access for all learners. Courses across the area are free of charge to many learners depending upon personal circumstances. Learning resources and materials are usually provided free of charge and any necessary equipment is also available. Learners with young children can join a broad range of courses where crèche and childminding facilities are available. Crèche provision is an important aspect of Family Learning that helps

parents to undertake learning. However, crèche provision is not available across the whole of Rhondda Cynon Taf and some learners are not able to use this service.

- 95 Many learners interviewed said that financial support and/or crèche facilities had helped them to attend courses and progress to further training. They stated that without this support they would have been unable to take part in learning.
- 96 The level of individual support offered to learners during the courses is high. In most cases, tutors are very aware of their learners' needs and know their abilities and personal circumstances. In most cases, learners are offered one-to-one tutorials with their tutor.
- 97 The quality of induction varies according to the provider and the nature of the provision. Most learners are aware of their rights, complaints procedures, accreditation, the support available to them, health and safety issues, their programme of study, financial matters and progression opportunities. Most tutors follow a set of induction criteria and use a check list to ensure that each learner is inducted fully and provided with any relevant information. However, a few tutors are not following any particular system and some do not know about progression opportunities and the support available for their learners.
- 98 There is good support for adults who have additional needs and specialist services are available. The borough council and Coleg Morgannwg take referrals from the Social Services department and other agencies and ensure that learners with physical and learning disabilities can be placed on courses according to their needs. Courses for learners with mental health problems include Welsh, yoga, woodwork, music, pottery, sewing, basic IT, art, cookery and dance. A coffee and craft shop at Talbot Green provides the opportunity for up to nine people with learning difficulties to work and gain various life and people skills.

Supporting learners

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Coleg Morgannwg work together to deliver Equal People - a training programme designed to create awareness of equality issues. The training programme is attended by learners, tutors, social workers and members of staff. The programme offers units that are accredited by OCN from entry level to level 3. Sixty learners have achieved level 1 to date and some are presently following the level 2 course.

- 99 Learners with additional needs benefit from support from experts in hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical impairment, dyslexia, psychological problems and learning difficulties. These facilities are available in Coleg Morgannwg.
- 100 Not all venues have wheelchair access. However, every effort is made to meet individual needs. Learners with particular physical access needs can find venue information in a disability booklet or from contacts provided in learner handbooks. Transport is available to help some learners who need help to get to their class.

- 101 Learning providers have procedures in place to carry out risk assessments for health and safety purposes. These are effectively used to redress problems and plan maintenance work.
- 102 The majority of providers have policies and procedures in place for the protection of vulnerable adults. Tutors are given clear guidance about how to identify and respond to potentially abusive situations and the procedure for reporting incidences of abuse. Almost 75% of the tutors observed had undergone a check by the criminal records bureau. This compares well with the number of tutors who had undergone this process in other areas inspected during this cycle.

## Leadership and management

### Key question 5: How effective are leadership and strategic management?

#### Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

- 103 A Better Life<sup>16</sup> - the Community Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf- identifies Learning for Growth as a key strategic priority for the area. Bro Dysg<sup>17</sup> is a strategic partnership that includes a range of public, private and voluntary sector bodies with an interest in education and training. Bro Dysg's purpose is to form a strategic overview of all education and learning needs in Rhondda Cynon Taf and to develop a community in which everyone can have the learning they need to achieve their potential. The partnership is charged with the responsibility of taking the Learning for Growth priority forward and is informed by a number of working groups that help in setting objectives. The CCET is located within the Bro Dysg framework and operates as a sub group of this wider strategic partnership. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has given good support to the establishment of Bro Dysg and provides finance to support the staffing infrastructure.
- 104 The community plan has been developed through wide ranging consultation with the community. The plan identifies key factors that promote learning for growth. However, the focus of these themes gives priority to 14-19 developments, whilst adult community-based learning is not given enough priority.
- 105 Community First Training partnerships established in the area have begun to develop strategic community learning plans for adult community-based learning in around half of the Communities First areas. Interlink, the Council for Voluntary Services, through its network of community organisations plays a useful role in identifying learning needs within communities. The organisation carries out a brokering role to put these communities in touch with appropriate providers.
- 106 Most leaders and managers work well within their own organisations to formulate strategic plans. Most leaders and managers consult with staff, learners and community groups about the strategic direction of their work. They take account of national and local priorities in determining aims, objectives and targets and their planning takes appropriate account of the Community Plan and ELWa's Statement of Regional Needs and Priorities for their own institutions.
- 107 Leaders and managers are generally well informed about the progress of their own institutions. Coleg Morgannwg has a good management information system in place. The college staff who are responsible for adult community-based learning use this system to monitor progress in the programmes they deliver themselves. They

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<sup>16</sup> A Better Life – the Community Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf; prepared by the Better Life Consortium – a partnership of public, voluntary and private sector organisations.

<sup>17</sup> Bro Dysg is a partnership comprising representatives from the statutory, voluntary and private sectors. The partnership, which incorporates the CCET, is tasked with providing strategic direction for education and training in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

use data well to inform their planning. However, programmes that are franchised to other providers are not included within this management information system and the performance management information for this part of the college's work is weaker.

- 108 However, the use of management information and performance monitoring is not consistently good across all providers. In organisations where this is not done well, the lack of data and analysis does not enable those organisations to identify areas of their provision that demand further scrutiny.
- 109 A few learning providers consult with learners to canvass their views about adult community-based learning. The WEA (South) committee structure enables the organisation to consult well with learners to organise provision. Coleg Morgannwg consults with learners following ABE courses to determine their views on course provision.
- 110 Managers communicate well with their own team members using a variety of methods such as meetings, newsletters and email. Staff are supported well by their line managers.
- 111 Bro Dysg's draft strategy sets out clearly the key challenges that education and learning strategies need to address in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The draft strategy identifies that too many people have poor basic skills. It recognises that this is a critical factor in impeding people's progress. However, it does not identify how adult community-based learning can play an effective role in improving the level of learners' basic skills.
- 112 Overall, Bro Dysg's strategic planning does not encompass adult community-based learning effectively. The proposed actions and targets are not specific enough to ensure that key partners in adult community-based learning understand the contribution they need to make to ensure that the priorities of the strategy are met. Learning providers have not set their own targets to help them measure their contribution to the Better Life priorities.
- 113 The lack of effective strategic planning for adult community-based learning inhibits providers in working together to set priorities, organise provision, identify key curricula, target those learners most in need and make the best use of the available resources. This hampers organisations in working with individual staff to set performance objectives that will ensure the success of any overall strategy. The lack of strategic planning for adult community-based learning restricts the effective monitoring of its impact on learners in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

**Key question 6: How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards?**

**Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings**

- 114 Overall, individual learning providers are making good progress in developing a systematic approach to the management of quality and standards. As a result, managers in many organisations are well informed about the performance of the

areas for which they are responsible. They make use of this information to plan and improve the quality of provision. Coleg Morgannwg has a well-established and sound system for assuring the quality of its own provision. A notable feature is the structured programme of self assessment, using the Estyn framework, that it carries out. Coleg Morgannwg has also recently set up a self-evaluation committee, which has been actively engaged in moderating the self assessment reports submitted by its departments.

- 115 There is variation in the extent and effectiveness of quality assurance systems in other learning providers and in Coleg Morgannwg's franchised provision. Coleg Morgannwg has provided useful guidance on quality management procedures to its franchise partners. However, the college has not extended and developed sufficiently its own robust approach to quality to its franchised provision.
- 116 Many learning providers are establishing effective systems for gathering performance information through classroom observation. This is a good feature of performance management at Coleg Morgannwg, the YMCA Community College and the WEA (South) provision. Nevertheless, in some areas of provision, lead tutors are not directly involved in classroom observation. Their subject specialisms are not used to the full to gain information on the progress learners make in specific subjects.
- 117 Learning providers have appropriate arrangements for recording the findings of classroom observations and providing feedback to tutors. This is particularly so in relation to the quality of lesson planning and delivery. However, not all learning providers' observation records place enough emphasis on learners and their progress.
- 118 A few learning providers offer tutors useful opportunities to observe their peers teaching across many learning areas. Tutors value the opportunity this brings for professional development. However, these learning providers do not use the outcomes of peer observation as part of their self-assessment processes. This inhibits the ability of tutors in being self-critical and limits their ownership of the self-assessment findings.
- 119 Overall, learning providers have effective systems for gathering the views of learners. They make good use of this information to inform course reviews. In many instances, the timing of learner consultation is too late to impact on the quality of provision and the learning experiences for the current cohort.
- 120 There is not enough good data available to measure performance and what there is, is not well used. Coleg Morgannwg does not make enough use of the data it collects for its franchised provision to evaluate its performance. The WEA(South) does not use the data that it collects about classes in Rhondda Cynon Taf to make comparisons about performance and outcomes with classes in their other regions or with national comparators.
- 121 The self-assessment reports supplied by learning providers are evaluative documents that provide useful information on aspects of provision. Most of the self-assessment reports provided for the inspection are based on the criteria in the

Estyn Common Inspection Framework. However, learning providers make little use, in their self-assessment reports, of performance information about the achievements of learners on the basis of data analysis and classroom observation. Nor do they provide an evaluation of progress against specific performance indicators. Those sections of self-assessment reports that cover key questions 3-7 make few specific references to good practice or areas for improvement in individual learning areas.

- 122 A good feature of the University of Glamorgan's self-assessment report is the attention that it gives to issues that the previous Estyn inspection report identified. The Coleg Morgannwg self-assessment report, and that of its franchised provision, offers grades for each of the Common Inspection Framework's seven key questions. The absence of grades in the self-assessment reports of other providers makes it difficult to assess the match between the findings of self-assessment reports and those of the external inspection.
- 123 There is a good match between the findings of external inspection and the findings of Coleg Morgannwg and University of Glamorgan and in relation to most learning areas in the self-assessment report for the franchised provision at Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council. The match is variable in relation to other providers.
- 124 Most of the self-assessment reports have useful Quality Development Plans. These link well with the areas for development identified in the self-assessment reports. Most of the development plans identify targets, timescales and people responsible for implementing proposed actions. However, they lack quantitative measures that would help monitor and evaluate the success of the proposed actions.
- 125 There is currently no mechanism for identifying and sharing examples of good practice in self-evaluation across providers in the area. Individual learning providers cannot compare their quality assurance systems with each other to ensure that learners are offered a consistent level of quality across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

### **Key Question 7: How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources?**

<b>Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings</b>
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- 126 Many staff in adult community-based learning in Rhondda Cynon Taf are qualified to occupational standards. Of the full-time staff observed across all learning providers, 96% are qualified to occupational standards and 92% of the part-time staff observed are qualified to occupational standards. All learning providers have strategies that support tutors to qualify to the required occupational standards. Interlink has a good system in place to select suitably experienced staff to teach on non-accredited courses. However, learning providers are not working together to ensure that all adult community-based learning tutors are qualified to occupational standards.
- 127 All learning providers have good staff development policies in place to support staff members in developing their skills. Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council has well developed staff development policies and procedures for personal development planning. Within Community Development, the borough council also makes good use of the University of Glamorgan Community Regeneration programme to develop the skills and understanding of their community development workers.

- 128 Access to adult community-based learning is very good as venues and centres for classes and learning activities are well distributed across the area. Learning providers operate from some 130 centres including schools, community centres, libraries, learning resource centres, chapels and main college sites. This promotes the involvement of adults who would not normally engage with learning. The use of schools for Family Learning enables learners to access a broader range of opportunities for progression, including employment as Learning Support Assistants and involvement in out-of-school play schemes.
- 129 Accommodation is generally of a good quality and suitable for the needs of adult learners. Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has recently invested in two purpose built community education centres. The borough council has produced a strategic plan for the use of all its own venues. However, learning providers have not worked together to determine a strategic plan for the use of all of the available accommodation within their control.
- 130 Overall, venues offer good access to ICT. Many venues have installed broadband to enhance the learners' experiences. Libraries have established good ICT facilities and also offer venues for classes.
- 131 Many tutors develop resources and learning aids to meet the specific needs and interests of learners in their classes. However, a very few learners, with specific additional or special learning needs, reported that learning aids which would help them to fully participate in learning have not been made available.
- 132 All providers have effective systems for allocating and monitoring resources. Coleg Morgannwg devolves budgets to Learning Area managers who have flexibility to fund courses that are appropriate to learners needs and to introduce new courses. The college manages its franchises via service level agreements that set out arrangements for allocating finances. The YMCA Community College has recently improved its systems for allocating resources across learning areas and monitoring expenditure.
- 133 However, systems for allocating funds for adult community-based learning in the area are rooted in historical practices for financing provision. Learning providers have not worked together to develop a strategic approach to the provision of adult community-based learning. This hinders them in making best use of the available resources in Rhondda Cynon Taf in order to secure value for money. The learning providers have not made use of community planning processes to identify the total available resources, prioritise expenditure and maximise opportunities to secure other funding.

## Standards achieved by learners in learning areas

### Learning Area: Adult Basic Education (including ESOL and Family Learning)

#### Key question 1: How well do learners achieve?

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Provider	Learning Area	Grade
Coleg Morgannwg	ABE and Family Learning	1
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	Family Learning	1

#### Success in attaining agreed learning goals

- 134 The majority of learners work to appropriate and relevant targets which are set at a challenging level. Learners have ownership of their Individual Learning Plans, of ten completing parts themselves and are aware of their targets. In most cases, learners set their own short-term and long-term goals. These are used by the tutors to plan effectively for individual lessons.
- 135 Learners' knowledge of literacy, numeracy and ICT is developed and extended through a range of stimulating and meaningful activities. The majority of learners know what they want to achieve and how to go about getting there. Learners are aware of their progress through the use of regular assessment. Tutorials on the 'Workchoices' programme provide a useful vehicle for learners to evaluate their progress and set future targets. Part-time learners have regular reviews at which they are able to discuss and measure progress.
- 136 Learners' attendance is generally good. The majority of learners inform tutors if they are unable to attend sessions.
- 137 Learners take pride in their work, files are neat, well organised and show evidence of progression.
- 138 The ISR<sup>18</sup> statistics for Coleg Morgannwg for 2002/2003 show that significant numbers of learners attain their qualification aims and successfully complete their courses. These statistics are significantly above the national comparators. The ISR statistics also show an upward trend for attainment and successful completion over a three year period for many courses. The college's own database shows an overall pass rate for ABE of 96% for 2003-2004. There is good embedding of basic skills through ICT and within contextualised and useful activities. There is a continuing upward trend in attainment which is well above the national comparator. There is good attainment within ESOL classes, however the retention rate is poor. Family learning enrolments have grown significantly from 314 in 2000-2001 to 1008 in

<sup>18</sup> ELWa's Individualised Student Record - See Appendix 2 Data and statistics: Explanatory note.

2003-2004. Attainment levels in family learning are consistently high and are almost double the national comparator.

### Progress in learning

- 139 In most ABE classes, learners make good progress with reading, writing and numeracy. Learners often progress to other classes to further widen their learning experiences. During 2003-2004, approximately two-thirds of learners progressed onto new programmes of learning. These included progression within ABE. Many learners also progressed to new topics within other learning areas to broaden their experience and skills.
- 140 There is good progression by learners in family learning classes into further courses, employment and school involvement. The majority of learners have no previous qualifications and make good progress against set targets. In a few classes, learners develop basic skills either bilingually or through the medium of Welsh. This provides the opportunity for them to increase their understanding of the language to support their children who attend Welsh language schools. Most learners achieve accreditation. They participate well in parent/child activities. They say that this has helped them to develop the confidence to offer support to their own children.

#### Progression within Family Learning

Learners participating in Family Learning consider that their experience has changed their lives. Participation in family learning classes has led to further study and accredited qualifications. Learners have moved on to level 2 courses to train as Learning Support Assistants and a few of them have secured employment in such roles. Other learners have progressed to GCSE maths classes.

One Family Literacy learner has progressed to NVQ level 3 in Child Care. Having become involved in Family Learning she wants to work in a school. She would not have previously considered such a role, but learning has improved her confidence, although she initially went to classes to learn to help her daughter. Participation in learning how to support her children has 'improved her children no end and changed the way she thinks about schools.'

Learners feel they have improved their personal and social skills by making new friends and participating in enrichment activities such as visits to the theatre and attendance at careers fairs.

## Development of personal, social and learning skills

- 141 Many of the learners who enrol on ABE classes have previously had very negative experiences of learning. They benefit from the support and encouragement they receive from staff which give them the confidence to re-engage in the learning process. Learners are very positive about the gains in confidence and self-esteem they have made whilst on a course. For example, one learner who left school at the age of 13, unable to read and write and with no qualifications, has recently enrolled on a BA degree course and plans to become a community worker helping ex-offenders.
- 142 Learners transfer skills gained in sessions into everyday situations and to develop career opportunities. A number of learners in family learning have secured employment as learning support assistants in primary schools or as play scheme workers. There is very good development of personal, social and learning skills which is comprehensively measured within each programme area and against a range of outcomes including 'improving confidence' and gaining skills useful in family/personal life.
- 143 Learners work well together and are supportive of each other in class.

### Learning Area: Welsh for Adults

#### Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

##### Grade 3: Good features outweigh shortcomings

Provider	Grade
University of Glamorgan	1
Coleg Morgannwg	3
YMCA Community College <sup>19</sup>	0

#### Success in attaining agreed learning goals

- 144 Learners achieve standards that are above national comparators or better in a high proportion of classes. In around a quarter of the classes visited, learners were making very good progress. However, there is undue variation in the progress learners make. In about one class in four, there are important shortcomings in learners' achievements.
- 145 In classes where achievements are good, learners make good progress in using Welsh spontaneously when talking with each other or with their teacher. They use patterns and vocabulary learnt in previous lessons. They show an increasing command of correct forms of the verb. Advanced learners are able to use the short forms of the past tense of the verb correctly and with ease, and make good progress

<sup>19</sup> A small number of classes managed by the YMCA Community College were included within the inspection. However they did not provide a large enough sample to award a grade for any learning area. Comments relating to the classes are provided in the text of the report.

in their ability to offer extended responses. Learners become increasingly capable of sustaining interactions in pairs and small groups.

- 146 An outstanding feature of the standards achieved by learners following the Cwrs Dwys<sup>20</sup> in the University of Glamorgan is the ability to engage in in-depth discussions of literary works with limited teacher support. The learners use a broad range of specialist terminology to analyse and express their opinions of texts they have read. A number of learners on the Cwrs Dwys are able to write extended and imaginative passages, making good use of a wide range of vocabulary and sentence patterns. Those who attend Welsh lessons in the workplace are making good progress in using vocabulary and phrases relevant to their jobs. Pronunciation is generally good across classes.
- 147 In the classes where progress is less evident, learners cope with using Welsh within the structured tasks they are given. However, they do not make enough use of language previously learnt to converse. They make little progress in extending their responses and show little signs of using Welsh spontaneously. In some classes, learners are working at a standard that is too low for the level of the course they are following.
- 148 The University of Glamorgan community provision has maintained completion rates that are well above the national average in spite of a big increase in enrolments over the past three years. There is also a pattern of improvement in completion rates on the Cwrs Dwys. Learner completion rates in Coleg Morgannwg and the YMCA Community College provision are well below national figures. The successful completion rate at Coleg Morgannwg is close to the Wales average and the attainment rates are above the Wales average. The University of Glamorgan attainment rates are lower than the national average.

### **Progress in learning**

- 149 In 2004, 10 Cwrs Dwys learners at the University of Glamorgan went on to follow higher education accredited modules. This is a very good achievement. In some classes, learners have a clear understanding of learning objectives for lessons, but this is not generally the case. The University of Glamorgan's recently introduced Cynllun Pontio<sup>21</sup> pilot scheme is having a significantly positive impact on learners' ability to converse with Welsh speaking members of the local community.

### **Development of personal, social and learning skills**

- 150 Learners in all classes show good levels of commitment and perseverance. They complete their tasks and are eager to improve spoken Welsh.

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<sup>20</sup> Cwrs Cymraeg Dwys/Intensive Welsh course - learners attend nine hours per week over two years and study through base material specifically developed for this course by university staff.

<sup>21</sup> Cynllun Pontio/Bridging Scheme - an initiative that recruits fluent Welsh speaking volunteers as mentors to Welsh learners and to support learners to become involved in Welsh medium activities in the community.

In many classes visited, attendance on the day of the visit was between a third and a half of the learners on the register. This reflected the overall trend over previous weeks. This is low, even when allowing for the impact of the summer term.

## Learning Area: Adult Learning

### Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?

#### Grade 1: Good with outstanding features

Provider	Grade
Coleg Morgannwg	1
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	2
WEA (South)	2
YMCA Community College <sup>22</sup>	0

### Success in attaining agreed learning goals

- 151 Most learners attain very good standards overall of knowledge, understanding and skills in their respective courses. In the best sessions, there are examples of outstanding work, for example in ICT, patchwork quilting, beauty therapy and woodwork.

Learners' achievements in Woodwork

Learners achieve a high quality of work in an Introduction to Woodwork Class. The class is targeted at learners who have recovered from psychologically related health problems. All learners have attained an OCN Entry Level qualification. They can recognise and use a range of woodworking tools to produce artefacts such as letter racks and key holders and work as a team to produce table tops. Learners have developed in confidence through these achievements and family members are extremely pleased with the outcomes from this class. They are making very good progress overall.

- 152 Learners in most classes are developing in confidence and competence. Many learners attain accreditation and then progress either to higher level courses or to other courses at a similar level to improve on their knowledge, understanding and skills. Learners respond willingly to tasks and assignments. They identify and attain personal targets within good timescales. There are good standards of problem solving, and learners work effectively as individuals, in groups and in teams. They

<sup>22</sup> A small number of classes managed by the YMCA Community College were included within the inspection. However, they did not provide a large enough sample to award a grade for any learning area. Comments relating to the classes are provided in the text of the report.

develop appropriate communication skills. The levels of ICT skills are very good overall and learners understand and react effectively to the aims of a project brief.

- 153 In beauty therapy courses learners make very good progress and demonstrate a high level of knowledge and skill. Achievement in art and design and sewing is generally good overall. Learners with severe learning difficulties make very good progress in woodwork.
- 154 The capacity of learning providers to collect and analyse reliable data on performance and outcomes varies between organisations. Coleg Morgannwg has well established systems in place, whilst other providers are in the process of developing the use of their data management systems. Where data for 2002/2003 is available for Coleg Morgannwg and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, attainment is consistently high, with both part-time and full-time learner outcomes above the national comparators. There is also a clear trend of improvement over recent years. The WEA (South) compiles data on a national and regional basis but does not make enough use of it, and national comparators are unavailable for many of the qualifications they deliver in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The YMCA Community College compiles data on a national basis, but it does not break down performance data to an area level at present.

### **Progress in learning**

- 155 Most learners make very good progress in learning. They often evaluate their progress against personal targets. In the most successful classes, learners work well on their own with little help needed from the tutor.
- 156 Learners with learning difficulties make good progress in developing their communication skills. They gain knowledge of Welsh traditions at an appropriate pace. In basic ICT courses, learners make reasonable progress and develop a good understanding of basic terms and functions. In a class for young parents, the parents develop a very good understanding of effective play techniques and story telling. Learners in healthy cookery develop a very good range of knowledge, understanding and skills that they then pass on to their communities.
- 157 Many learners return to classes annually in order to progress to a higher level in the same subject, or start a new course. In more specialised ICT classes, such as PowerPoint, learners make very good progress in developing appropriate knowledge and skills. The work is creative, reflecting a consideration of colour, contrast, and awareness of perspective and flair. The learners improve their research skills through consideration of Welsh contemporary issues and famous personalities. The strong element of self critical analysis of their own performance is an effective feature of many classes and ensures that progress in learning is very good overall.

### **Development of personal, social and learning skills**

- 158 Many learners benefit from the opportunities provided across the area. Older learners appreciate the high level of companionship and support provided by their tutors and peers.

**Learners' achievements  
in patchwork quilting**

Learners in a patchwork quilting class at a local church in Pontypridd, run by Coleg Morgannwg use their skills for the benefit of their community. The learners are an enthusiastic and focused group of women, most of whom are church members. They call themselves 'The Crafty Crew!!' Learners achieve well in class, producing a range of individual high quality work. They also work to produce a group quilt. They make aprons and cot covers for a local hospital and have created a very good wall hanging depicting various features of their church. Coleg Morgannwg recognised the group's achievements in November 2004 and presented them with a Community Group Award. They have attracted press coverage at both local and national levels.

- 159 Adults with young families respond well to the opportunities to learn vital parenting and living skills. They develop a growing awareness of their civic responsibilities and a strong sense of social concern for others within their community. However, there are limited opportunities for Welsh speakers to use their Welsh in classes.

**Learning Area: Community Development**

**Key Question 1: How well do learners achieve?**

**Grade 2: Good features and no important shortcomings**

Provider	Grade
Interlink	2
Coleg Morgannwg	2
WEA (South)	2
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	2

**Success in attaining agreed learning goals**

- 160 Learners in community development programmes, including ICT, dance, crafts and event planning, achieve good standards. They attend sessions regularly and most complete their programmes of learning. They are well motivated and develop a good range of skills. Many learners who had left full-time education early noted the programmes had helped them to feel more positive about learning. This has encouraged them to consider more advanced programmes.
- 161 In several programmes, particularly those run by the WEA (South) and Interlink, groups of learners have negotiated their own curricula with providers. This has helped the learners to feel involved in their managing their own learning. However, learners on a few programmes do not have clear learning plans. These learners are not always sure about the skills they are expected to gain on completion of their programme, or what their overall goals are. Other learners are frequently unaware

of the key skills that they are developing. Learners with basic skills needs often do not develop strategies to improve these skills during their learning programmes.

### **Progress in Learning**

- 162 Learners engage in a broad variety of programmes at a range of levels. These include introductory programmes that help young parents to develop craft skills and parenting skills, and programmes aimed at supporting community volunteers in developing planning skills. One group of learners who suffer from dementia have shown improved memory scores in their clinical tests since being involved in poetry workshops.
- 163 A group of retired learners has used reminiscences of their childhood to develop a dance-related performance involving multimedia technology. These learners have made good progress in expressing ideas and memories through dance and in combining this dance with suitable music and images.
- 164 Many learners have a good appreciation of the progress they have made in their learning, and the skills that they have acquired since enrolling on their programmes. There are good examples of learners progressing onto more demanding or advanced programmes. Two learners who attended an entry level OCN course in craft have now completed nationally accredited programmes in child care at level 2. One former learner who began a Next Steps programme at entry level is now completing a degree.
- 165 In a few classes, learners are not made sufficiently aware of how they could advance their skills even further once they have completed their programme of learning.
- 166 Most learners support each other well in the classroom. More advanced learners often take the initiative to support others, which helps less advanced learners to make better progress.

### **Development of personal, social and learning skills**

- 167 Learners talk enthusiastically about how their learning has helped them to develop self confidence and to recognise their potential. Many learners describe how the self-esteem and confidence they have gained helps them to use the skills they acquire outside of the classroom, in a way that benefits the community. A few learners have found that there are increased job opportunities available to them as a result of the skills that they have learned.
- 168 In one programme aimed at parents and carers of school children, many learners had made good progress in developing ICT skills. These learners were using their newly acquired skills to support and encourage their children to use software and internet resources to aid their learning.
- 169 Participants in a reminiscence project felt that they had improved their own perception of the value of their life experiences. The project, which explored what life was like in the Rhondda Valleys prior to World War Two, enabled learners to recognise the richness of their childhood experience and how it had shaped their

view of the world and themselves. Several learners are now planning to visit primary schools to supplement teaching resources relating to history using the resources and materials generated by the project.

- 170 Two learners who have learned craft and childcare skills have undertaken additional learning and have set up play schemes within their community. However, a few learners have not gained an understanding of how they can use their new skills for the benefit of their community.
- 171 In several programmes, learners have improved their understanding and appreciation of the language and culture of Wales. In one performance art project, bilingual learners are encouraged to make use of the Welsh language within their performance.

## **Providers' response to the report findings**

Individual providers' responses included the following points relating to how they will address the recommendations in the report:

### **Coleg Morgannwg**

Coleg Morgannwg is pleased that the findings of our established self-assessment procedure are a good match to the findings of the external inspection. The college is particularly pleased that both ABE and ACL have retained their Grade 1 status in the new area inspection process.

In response to the recommendations, the college will develop and monitor an internal action plan and work in partnership with other ACL providers to ensure coherent systems are developed for planning and quality across the geographical area of RCT.

We will work with the RCT Welsh Consortium to ensure that issues raised with regard to Welsh for Adults are addressed.

### **Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the findings and to support the action planning process as a result of the inspection. We will work with partners to construct and implement an action plan to address the main findings of the report.

As far as the Council's own self-assessment exercise is concerned, we are pleased that Estyn's findings bear a strong correlation with our own analysis of service strengths and areas for improvement.

We are particularly pleased that the inspection report acknowledges the significant contribution to community learning made by our adult education service, by our Communities First partnership, by libraries and by community arts and museum programmes. This infrastructure helps to provide a rich 'mix' of adult learning in our area and is a contributory factor in Estyn's award of a Grade 1 for Key Question 1, 'How well do learners achieve?'

The inspection report points to particular strengths in partnership working in the area. We are mindful, however, of Estyn's recommendation to strengthen strategic planning for adult community-based learning. We will work with our partners in the Bro Dysg 'Learning for Growth' partnership to provide a stronger and more sustained focus on adult learning. We anticipate that the inspection action plan will be 'owned' by Bro Dysg, as well as by individual partners.

We will work with our partners to improve the range of community learning activities available in our area and we will work, with others, on developing a shared understanding of quality processes and procedures and aim to produce a provider handbook based upon sound principles and good practice. We will further

strengthen our monitoring of the quality of our own provision and make greater use of available data to benchmark progress.

Finally, the inspection provided us with both the endorsement needed to celebrate our good practice and a valuable tool for initiating change.

### **WEA (South)**

WEA South Wales welcomes the report on the quality of Adult Community Based Learning in Rhondda Cynon Taff.

The WEA works with a range of providers within Rhondda Cynon Taff, in addition to the Learn Direct partnership and our links with the University of Glamorgan and the University of Wales, Newport. We welcome the recommendations for greater partnership across the area and the WEA are now represented on an area quality group, looking at responding to the recommendations, sharing quality processes and establishing priorities. We would welcome the opportunity to be better represented with Bro Dysg.

The fact that the inspection took place in the summer term and before the WEA summer school meant that some of the WEA provision aimed at promoting healthy living was not running at the time of the inspection.

We recognise that we need to focus more effectively on the use of our data, within our area reports and establish benchmarking where feasible and have included this in our current operational plan.

### **Interlink**

Interlink was pleased to be included as a provider in the inspection as the role of a County Voluntary Council, such as ourselves, in relation to learning, particularly through community development is not always understood. The recognition by Estyn of our own and the voluntary sector's contribution to adult community based learning was pleasing.

The recommendations made by the Inspectors to Interlink have been taken on board. They all point in the direction of better, sharper practice and Interlink intends to take action to address each of them as we plan a programme of learning for 2006. We also intend to work with and learn from our partner organisations and agencies in Rhondda Cynon Taff to broaden the range of opportunities that can be offered to adults in the community. We do not have a learning network or forum for voluntary sector organisations and intend to work to establish such a network to give adult community based learning a higher profile and also to develop the range of learning opportunities offered in communities in Rhondda Cynon Taff. The inspection has reinforced our belief that a greater commitment to community based learning and enhanced understanding of the learning needs of people in communities, particularly starting points for learning, is a critical part of the overall picture of provision. This is particularly so in an area with 23 disadvantaged communities (as defined by Communities First) each of which will evidence problems of basic and life skills. It is working in these areas of learning that the experience of the voluntary sector lies. The Inspection has shown Interlink and other voluntary organisations how to do it better.

## **YMCA Community College**

YMCA Wales Community College welcomes Estyn's report as a steer to bring all adult community education providers in RCT together.

YMCA Wales Community College acknowledges the need to work collaboratively with other education providers in the strategic planning of adult community based learning. It is hoped that procedures will be put in place by one of the large players to draw together all providers in the RCT area.

Effective collaboration at the planning stage should reduce duplication of provision and waste of resources and create opportunities for the development of a broader curriculum.

YMCA Wales Community College has, during the academic year 2004/2005, addressed the issue of encouraging male learners to engage in education and will concentrate its efforts in 2005/2006 in developing bilingual opportunities for learning and extend the provision further into the summer term.

YMCA Wales Community College will review its learner support and guidance procedures to incorporate the recommendations made in the Estyn Report.

## **University of Glamorgan**

From a University viewpoint, we are very pleased with the gradings we received for the Welsh for Adults element. The main findings of the report match the Department's perception of the process and colleagues agree with the comments made. Indeed some of the comments where Cwrs Dwys(Intensive Course) and Cynllun Pontio (Bridging Course) are specifically mentioned are very encouraging.

The Welsh Department at the University intend to respond to the recommendations when developing the new SAR and action plan. Minutes of the final feedback session at the end of the Inspection were taken and will provide useful additional information to Glamorgan as more specific recommendations were suggested.

In line with the general tenor of the report, the University's Centre for Lifelong Learning and the Welsh Department are keen to further develop links with ACBL agencies within RCT through Bro Dysg, on which the University is represented. Since the inspection, there has been a meeting with other RCT Quality contacts with a view to setting up an RCT ACBL Quality group.

The report is on the agenda for the next meeting of the WfA Consortium. We are mindful that this is a period of change for WfA with bids for the new national lead centres expected in September. Focus on the quality of provision will be central to the new lead centres concept and Glamorgan will take an active role in the development of quality assurance processes for WfA within the local lead centre, wherever it is located.

## Appendix 1

### **Evidence base of the inspection**

The inspection team consisted of HMI, additional inspectors and peer assessors. The team carried out 92 inspection visits and 28 meetings.

The team visited:

- teaching sessions;
- a variety of learner activities;
- Communities First projects; and
- community venues.

Members of the team had meetings with:

- learners;
- tutors;
- centre managers;
- finance managers;
- quality managers;
- chair of Bro Dysg;
- chair of the CCET;
- learning area programme leaders;
- heads of further education institutions;
- governors of further education institutions;
- community development workers;
- representatives of communities; and
- representatives of other projects, organisations and providers.

The team also considered:

- a wide selection of examples of learners' work; and
- comprehensive documentation made available by the providers, both before and during the inspection.

## Appendix 2

### Data and Statistics: Explanatory notes

The statistics described in the report refer to the **National Comparators** for 2002/2003 that are based on the **Individualised Student Record (ISR)**. These statistics are compiled by ELWa and Estyn from data supplied by individual organisations and institutions.

The statistics provide comparative data for a range of courses across 19 learning areas. The extent of these statistics is limited as only FE institutions were required to submit the full ISR returns which form the basis of the National Comparators.

The National Comparators enable inspectors to compare similar data for individual organisations and institutions and make judgements about the performance of particular courses and learning areas within institutions and organisations.

There are three sets of National Comparators:

**Completion** - this comparator is concerned with the proportion of learners who complete their qualification aims. In other words, the proportion of enrolled learners who stay on their course to the end.

These statistics enable inspectors to make comparisons between institutions and organisations for individual courses and learning areas regarding the proportion of learners who complete their course.

**Attainment** - this comparator is concerned with the proportion of learners who achieve their qualification aim and attain qualifications or certification. Thus inspectors are able to determine not only the proportion of learners who complete their course or qualification aim but also the proportion of those learners who attain a qualification or certification. Comparisons can be made between individual institutions or organisations and the National Comparator to make judgements about performance.

**Successful Completion** - this comparator is concerned with the proportion of the total number of enrolled learners who complete their course or qualification aim and attain a qualification or certification.

### Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)

Data used in the section describing the nature of providers is derived from the adult community-based learning programmes in the LLWR for 2003/2004. This data enables inspectors to determine the volume of ELWa funded provision delivered by individual providers in relation to the total volume of ELWa funded provision available to adult learners in the area.