

Embracing Change: A College for the Future

A consultation document on the proposed merger
of Swansea College and Gorseinon College



Abbreviations:

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| DCELLS | Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills |
| EMT | Executive Management Team |
| FE | Further Education |
| FMA | Foundation Modern Apprenticeships |
| FTE | Full Time Equivalent |
| HE | Higher Education |
| HNC/HND | Higher National Certificate/Higher National Diploma |
| HR | Human Resources |
| IB | International Baccalaureate |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| KTP | Knowledge Transfer Partnerships |
| LLWR | Lifelong Learning Wales Record |
| MA | Modern Apprenticeships |
| NEETS | [Young People] Not in Education, Employment or Training |
| NVQ | National Vocational Qualifications |
| SMT | Senior Management Team |
| SMU | Swansea Metropolitan University |
| SOP | Strategic Outline Proposal |
| SSA | Subject Sector Area |
| WAG | Welsh Assembly Government |
| WB | Welsh Baccalaureate |
| WBL | Work Based Learning |

The consultation documents [full and summary versions] and the response form are available to download from www.swancoll.ac.uk and www.gorseinon.ac.uk

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1. Introduction:



This consultation document sets out the background and rationale for a proposal from Swansea College and Gorseinon College that they should merge to form a single new college.

Any merger proposal will require the formal approval of the Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills [DCELLS] before it can be put before the Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills for a decision.

DCELLS will consider the result of this consultation, due diligence studies and the full outline business case for merger in late 2009. The criteria against which the Department will judge the proposal are set out in Appendix i. DCELLS will then decide whether to forward a proposal for merger to the Minister for determination.

A list of organisations being consulted is shown in Appendix ii. Responses from any organisation or individual not included on this list are also encouraged and welcomed and all will be considered. It will be helpful if they are made on the enclosed form.

All responses should be emailed to a.lowe@swancoll.ac.uk or posted to Allison Lowe, Communications Officer, Swansea College, Tychoch Road, Sketty, Swansea, SA2 9EB.

2. Foreword by Corporation Chairs: Our vision for a post-16 provision in Swansea

Our vision for a merged college is that it will bring together two complementary, successful organisations to create an institution that will provide outstanding learning opportunities and experiences for young people, adults and employers in Swansea.

A single merged Further Education [FE] college in Swansea will be part of a broader transformation of provision in the City and County of Swansea. By 2015 there will probably be fewer school sixth forms and those remaining will include Welsh language and faith schools. Provision will be monitored and agreed mutually between schools and the college to avoid unnecessary competition and duplication and to ensure that the offer meets the needs of the learner, irrespective of where they live in the area. There will be agreed guidelines on entry requirements and on other measures of quality such as successful retention and completion rates.

Together we will provide a 'mixed economy' of learning opportunities in Swansea that will meet everyone's learning preferences, be that a desire to remain in school or to progress into FE to experience academic and vocational learning that will lead either to high quality employment or to Higher Education [HE] in Wales and beyond. Indeed, HE provision will also have been factored in to the changes envisaged for Swansea so that articulation between vocational provision at Level 3 and Foundation Degree/Degree programmes becomes a central part of our academic planning.

We will retain the current colleges' unique identities. The new merged college will offer 'the best of both'. It will be on two main sites as well as a number of smaller 'satellite' centres. In the short term the main sites will be Belgrave Road in Gorseinon and Tycoch Road in Swansea. In the longer term, a new centre will be opened in Parc Tawe to replace the Tycoch campus and other satellite centres. In this way, areas to the east of the city will be served more adequately than at present.

The centre in Belgrave Road will be a 'sixth form' centre and will retain its identity as 'Gorseinon Centre' or 'Gorseinon Sixth Form College'. The Swansea centre will be home for the heavily resourced vocational provision up to degree level and be open to learners of all ages. Both sites will expand to absorb additional learners who have not previously progressed to post-16 education or training or who have moved as a result of closing sixth forms.

A new campus in the city centre will become an even stronger attraction to employers and their staff, those in schools and those who are not in education, employment or training. Easy access for people living to the east of the city, as well as iconic learning environments and the most modern of technology, will add to the attraction of this centre.

All the sites operated by the new college will be of the highest standard. As efficiencies are achieved, monies can be directed to front line delivery and resources. Development that can only be dreamed of at present will become a possibility within a larger institution. This will especially be the case as financial support for capital projects from the Welsh Assembly Government [WAG] promises to reward those institutions that respond positively to the Transformation Agenda. The days of operating out of sub-standard accommodation will be long gone: overcrowding will be replaced with spacious learning and resource areas. To the public, therefore, the change they see to post-16 learning in Swansea will be for the better.

Competition will be reduced as a coherently planned provision will be available with clear pathways from entry to intermediate and advanced level courses. There will no longer be barriers to effective progression at 16 because all providers will ensure that learners are made fully aware of the options that they can follow at 14, 16 and beyond. The college and schools will be centres of excellence in particular academic and vocational disciplines. A range of newly formed 'academies' within the college will be magnets to young people and adults in the area through the choice that they offer and the very highest quality of the provision. In addition the merged college will look to build upon existing employer links in order to develop a single point of contact to facilitate productive working relationships and a responsive provision to meet skills needs locally and regionally.

By August 2010 there will be a new legal entity formed and a newly created Corporation made up in equal parts from the existing Governing Bodies of Swansea and Gorseinon Colleges. Additional Governors will be sought where there are gaps in the experience and expertise of existing Board members. Before August 2010, there will be a new Chair of the Board and a new Principal/Chief Executive Officer [CEO.] Other changes to the college will have begun but a fully-fledged new institution will have yet to be formed. During this change period it must be emphasised that there should be no detrimental impact on existing learners. It must be 'business as usual.' The new college will take shape over the ensuing 12 to 18 months so that change evolves and is managed rather than suddenly imposed. In this way, a stronger and more positive culture will be nurtured in the new organisation.



The leadership team in the merged college will focus on people during this critical period with clear, open and transparent communication and fair and consistent management. The team will demonstrate empathy as change is managed effectively within the organisation. Systems and procedures will need to be refined but in a measured manner ensuring that risk is minimised, people are consulted and that the impact on customers is minimal. Uniformity will not be imposed where it leads to mediocrity. The merged college will always aim to retain the best customer service at all times.

The new college will be the second largest in Wales with an annual turnover of nearly £40m. In times of increasing economic uncertainty and likely further cuts in the funding available from government, such a large organisation will be better able to withstand such financial pressures than a smaller unit. It will create a powerful voice and lobbying force and will be better placed to generate income from work with employers and more favourably positioned than at present to benefit from new sources of funding. It will also be more likely to prevent the level of job losses that we have already seen in our separate institutions and in the Welsh FE sector as a whole. Indeed, it is likely that we will need to grow to accommodate new learners that will attend this vibrant, exciting new college.

Our aim is that the merged college will be an even stronger organisation than its predecessors. It will retain the best features of the individual institutions and be an integral part of a new, coherent Swansea post-14 curriculum offer.

Our vision for education in Swansea is a compelling one. It is not dependent on a single transformation within the area's providers but on 'root and branch' reform of the whole provision. Merger will not, of itself, affect the changes described here but rather needs to be part of a broader change.

Uniquely, and for the first time in a generation, the opportunity has arisen to create a coherent and exciting response to the Government's call to action. We must embrace, manage and shape this change.

Alan Thomas

Chair of Governors, Swansea College




Robin Kirby

Chair of Governors, Gorseinon College

3. Executive summary

Following the publication of the Welsh Assembly Government's 'Transforming Education and Training in Wales', and in subsequent discussions with key stakeholders in the county and region, the Corporations of Swansea College and Gorseinon College commissioned a feasibility study into a proposed merger between the two colleges.

This consultation document is based upon the findings of the feasibility study and, together with 'due diligence' enquiries about the colleges' financial, legal and Human Resources issues, will form the basis upon which the Minister will make the final decision about merger.

The Corporations have decided that the WAG's vision of transformation would be best achieved through a formal, voluntary merger between the two colleges following the dissolution of both existing Corporations and the formation of a new entity. This would provide both institutions with an equal opportunity to influence, manage and shape the new merged organisation. However, they also recognise that becoming a single FE institution for the City and County of Swansea is only part of the solution, albeit an important part, that needs to be put in place in the longer term to fully address the challenges laid down in Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales.

The case for merger outlined in this consultation document reflects the desire of both colleges to move forward on the basis of the policy and strategy outlined in the Transformation of Education for Wales agenda.

The individual sites' strong reputations for specialist areas of excellence should not only be safeguarded but enhanced.

The analysis of each college's profile shows that they complement each other's provision and services. Gorseinon College focuses its provision on academic and Level 3 courses whereas Swansea College concentrates on vocational programmes across a range of levels and the majority of the sector skills areas, with the exception of agriculture and horticulture.

For 16-18 year olds there is little difference between the colleges' levels of activity. It is for 19+ learners that Swansea College shows considerably more activity [nearly 3.5 times Gorseinon's volume.] In terms of overall volume of activity, Swansea College delivers twice the amount of FE provision of Gorseinon. If current provision was combined there would be very few obvious gaps in terms of learner pathways and progression opportunities. The pro-active nature of both colleges has ensured responses to identified needs and local priorities.

The proposed merger will create a college that can deliver a high degree of choice for the 14-19 year old learner. It will deliver a flexible and responsive service for employers with a wide range of business support and training services through a single point of contact. The availability of adult training and development programmes will be maximised to assist the WAG in achieving its workforce targets and it will provide an extended HE offer with increased progression routes.

It will also be important that an open dialogue is maintained with the City and County of Swansea's LEA and sixth form schools during and after the merger process. Nugatory competition must be minimised, but without removing the element of choice for parents and pupils who prefer the more traditional A Level route.

A merger will also give a potential for efficiencies arising from a reduction in management costs and a move towards common support services. Savings in energy, utilities and maintenance will only come about through investment in new and more efficient premises, rather than through merger per se.

Both Swansea College and Gorseinon College have one main campus and a number of satellite sites. There is scope for a rationalisation of estates that would result in reduction of operating costs, maintenance costs and capital required for backlog maintenance.

The primary driver for merger is that of improved opportunities for the learners of Swansea. That said, a merger will also enable the more cost efficient delivery of that learning.

A timetable for merger has been agreed with DCELLS and is shown in detail in section 15 of this consultation document.

4. The Context of the Proposed Merger

National Context



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

In the recent document, 'Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales: Delivering Skills that Work for Wales (2008),' a key priority for the WAG is to secure a workforce that is sufficiently skilled to access future high level employment opportunities. Evidence referred to in the report suggests that to help achieve this, the WAG should seek ways to more fully integrate the work of schools, FE institutions, HE institutions and other post -16 providers to transform the ways in which education and training provision is delivered.

The document clarifies the WAG's expectation of learning providers to take the necessary steps to form geographic and sectoral Learning Partnerships and to submit to DCELLS outline proposals for change, in the form of a Strategic Outline Programme, by early 2009.

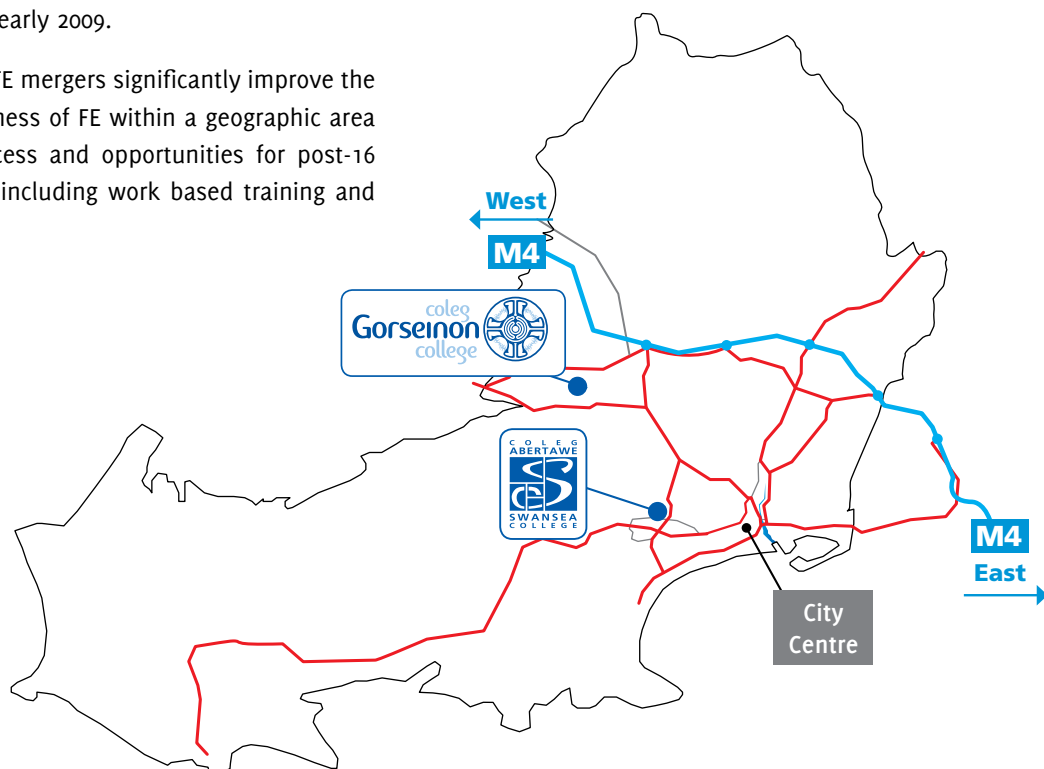
The WAG believes that 'FE mergers significantly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of FE within a geographic area and promote wider access and opportunities for post-16 education and training including work based training and community provision.'

Local context



There are currently two FE colleges in the City and County of Swansea - Swansea College and Gorseinon College. In addition there are seven sixth forms and two Welsh language schools.

In October 2007, the Leader of Swansea Council launched the QEd 2020, which is a cross-Council approach to addressing the issues of sustainable education and provision, improving achievement and attainment, improving the learning environment in schools, making better use of resources and, where appropriate, providing integrated services on school sites. Recent announcements by the Council indicate an intention to rationalise post-16 provision in schools including the closure of some sixth forms.



5. The Rationale and Justification for the Proposed Merger

A merged college would have increased opportunity to provide clear unambiguous options to learners with pathways extended, developed and available within the same institution.



Estyn compliments both colleges on their outstanding support for their learners. Bringing this support together, with the advantages of increased economies of scale and expertise within different areas, levels and types of curriculum delivery, should improve the range and scope of this support.

The proposed merger will create a college that can deliver:

- **For 14-19 year old learners** – a high degree of choice through providing distinctive alternatives to school based provision. This would contribute to the Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales strategy by providing an extended, diverse range of high quality, exciting and relevant learning opportunities that match the needs and aspirations of all young people in Swansea and the surrounding areas.
- **For employers** – a flexible and responsive service that can respond rapidly to employer needs, providing a very wide range of business support and training services through a single point of contact.
- **For adult learners** seeking qualifications and training – the maximum availability of adult training and development programmes that assist the WAG in achieving its workforce targets; and
- **For HE learners** – an extended HE offer for Swansea with increased progression routes and the ability to collaborate and act in partnership with HE providers.

The total number of learners will establish a substantial provider with significant scope for economies of scale and the ability to respond rapidly to initiatives and local needs. Changing demographics and adjustments to funding methodology could be absorbed more readily and may be managed more creatively.

The 'heavier' vocational areas, such as Hospitality and Catering, are delivered by Swansea College although both Swansea and Gorseinon currently offer Engineering and Motor Vehicle provision. Gorseinon College delivers a range of provision associated with a high quality, 16-19 curriculum plus innovative work in vocational areas such as the Arts, Care and Business.

Opportunities for learners may be further enhanced through an increased flexibility with respect to the Welsh Baccalaureate [WB] and the integration of current good practice within the International Baccalaureate [IB] programme which is currently delivered by Swansea College.

The merged college will have increased capacity and resources to deliver higher quality outcomes and improved success rates for learners. This will be possible by mapping each college's key strengths and areas for improvement at both Subject Sector Area [SSA] and course level and producing a detailed action plan to further improve provision.

The merged college will build on the best practice available within each college currently and extend this across all provision so all students would therefore benefit. In particular, this will develop 'best practice' in all aspects of its teaching and learning and for student support arrangements.

The merged college will run an expanded and more cost effective Continuing Professional Development [CPD] training programme, building on existing Professional Development programmes in both colleges.

The larger college will provide better progression and development opportunities for staff which would enhance professional development and improve staff recruitment and retention.

The merged college will allow the development of a single comprehensive business support and training service for local employers. A team of dedicated staff will be created to lead the college's relationship with business, avoiding the current duplication of effort across the two colleges and removing any confusion for local businesses that has been created by two Swansea based colleges approaching them to sell similar products. A dedicated team will be able to draw on the expertise currently available, as well as being able to deploy directly employed specialist staff.

The service will build on the substantial existing, high quality Work Based Learning [WBL] and employer engagement activities of both colleges. The more efficient and effective deployment of the colleges' employer engagement teams will result in a significantly increased capacity to expand 'employer responsive' work.

In proposing the merger, the colleges do not underestimate the challenges arising from both the changing external environment and the need to bring together two separate organisations, their structures and cultures. The existing colleges have demonstrated their capacity to improve and both have a track record of strong financial management. As a result, the Governors and Senior Managers are confident that the merged college will have the capability and capacity to meet the challenges. They are also confident that the merger will provide the deprived communities in Swansea with better education and training opportunities than would be achievable without merger.

6. Objectives of the Merger

The colleges propose that the objectives of the merger are to:

- i. Increase local participation rates by launching new educational and training opportunities to meet the needs of young people, adults and employers.
- ii. Increase learners' opportunities to exercise choice by offering breadth within the curriculum.
- iii. Meet the needs of learners and employers by further raising the levels of success rates to or above the national benchmarks.
- iv. Improve quality of provision, as measured by all provision being self-assessed as good or excellent with the self-assessment grades being externally confirmed.
- v. Improve financial efficiency.
- vi. Maximise value for money.
- vii. Embed all aspects of equality and diversity.
- viii. Implement a joint property strategy to develop the sites across Swansea.
- ix. Contribute to the economic development of Swansea by improving skills and preparing people for work, there by sustaining and attracting employers in and to the area and increasing levels of entrepreneurship.



In order to achieve its objectives, it is anticipated that the new college will:

- Expand WBL opportunities and apprenticeships.
- Work with the local authorities and other local providers to deliver new provision targeted to reduce the proportion of local 16-18 year olds who are NEET and develop further the education and training opportunities for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Exploit ICT to develop e-learning, providing more interactive and flexible learning opportunities.
- Work with HE providers to develop new local opportunities including new foundation degrees
- Strengthen advice, support and guidance systems for learners
- Improve progression routes by introducing new provision that is not currently available within the normal travel to learn area.
- Seek to establish a national reputation in respect of the voice of the learner.
- Aim to be in the top 10% of colleges for learner success rates and to be judged as an outstanding college by Estyn.
- Secure and maintain nationally recognised quality 'kite marks' in relation to its operations including the Training Quality Standard, Investors in People, fforwm Awards and a range of appropriate charter marks relating to employer practices and equality and diversity initiatives.
- Become a nationally recognised provider of first class teaching and learning and promote a network of similar providers which seeks to disseminate good practice.

The objectives will be underpinned by a set of key values and beliefs:

The new college will:

- Ensure a safe and healthy environment for its staff and learners and actively participate in those initiatives which seek to promote good role models for staff and learners.
- Promote the voice of the learners and respond positively to those suggestions which improve learner participation, involvement and performance.
- Seek and respond to the views of key stakeholders including staff, employers and the wider community.
- Embed all aspects of equality and diversity into its corporate culture and operating practices.

Justification of the Merger

Governors assess that the key benefit of the proposed merger will be the creation of a college that will:

- Provide services that will enable local people to complete successfully in the job market and encourage employers to train their staff.
- Have an increased focus on vocational training and responsiveness to employers.
- Increase choice by developing opportunities for vocational specialization and increase progression opportunities across an expanded range of provision up to and including Level 5.
- Increase local participation rates by developing services where there is a need, such as employability, services to employers, 14-19 provision with full progression routes, provision for 16-18 NEETs and HE.
- Increase learner success rates.
- Enable new collaborations and partnerships to be developed to support a broader and richer range of school links, WBL, business support initiatives and HE provision.
- Provide an environment that is accessible to all, that promotes equality of opportunity and values diversity.
- Deliver a strong vocational offer for Swansea from two hubs of excellence.
- Be large enough to win the necessary financial support for much needed capital development.
- Be financially strong enough to invest in resources and improvements to its estate.

Local employers will be able to look forward to working in partnership with the merged college to develop the local workforce as well as being able to recruit suitably qualified new employees who are used to striving for excellence.

Local youngsters who are currently at secondary school will be able to look forward to choosing between a range of institutions at the age of 16, among which will be the merged college with a first-class reputation, new facilities and an exciting offer that will enable their successful progression to employment or HE.

7. The Merger Proposal and Proposed Name of the New College

In the light of the WAG's policy to avoid duplication and ensure entitlement to young people of quality provision, and having carried out detailed research, the Corporation Boards of Swansea College and Gorseinon College have concluded that the best way forward would be the establishment of one FE college in the City and County of Swansea.

Staff, students and the public have, in a separate exercise, been consulted about the name of the merged college. Once a Shadow Board has been formed for the college, a decision on the new name will be made in due course.



8. College Curriculum Profiles

For current students at both colleges, it is anticipated that they will continue their studies in the same location as that where their studies commenced. Where a change in location is deemed necessary, the merged college would endeavour to consult with students so that every effort is made to ensure the needs of learners are met.

Regardless of where new and existing provision will be located in the merged college, it is proposed that movement between sites would be kept to a minimum, but where this was necessary it would be made as convenient as possible.

Although it is difficult at this stage to detail the curriculum changes and harmonisation which will be required during and after the merger, this section of the Consultation document provides an overview of provision at both colleges which will be used as a starting point for planning purposes for the merged college.

Data from the LLWR [Lifelong Learning Wales Record] for the 2007/08 academic year has been used to analyse provision at the colleges. An FTE [Full Time Equivalent] is based on 450 hours of study in a year, which is arrived from a 30 week x 15 hours per week programme.





Swansea College

Swansea College is one of the largest FE colleges in Wales. The college is situated in the west of Swansea and serves an area with a population of 230,000. The college offers provision, mainly vocational, across the majority of Sector Subject Areas [SSAs] and traditional A/AS Level type areas. It provides community and adult provision on a number of sites in the city. It offers provision for Work Based Learning [WBL] and is a major partner in all education and training activities in the City and County of Swansea.

Swansea College Full Time Equivalent Learners [FTEs] and proportions by SSA

| Swansea | 16-18 | | 19+ | | All | |
|---|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| | FTEs | % of cohort activity | FTEs | % of cohort activity | Grand Total* | % of cohort activity |
| 1. Health, Public Services and Care | 522 | 12% | 578 | 10% | 1,100 | 11% |
| 2. Science and Mathematics | 143 | 3% | 76 | 1% | 219 | 2% |
| 3. Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care | 0 | 0% | 2 | 0% | 2 | 0% |
| 4. Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies | 786 | 18% | 760 | 13% | 1,547 | 15% |
| 5. Construction, Planning and the Built Environment | 94 | 2% | 248 | 4% | 342 | 3% |
| 6. Information and Communication Technology | 296 | 7% | 344 | 6% | 640 | 6% |
| 7a. Retailing and Customer Service | 20 | 0% | 266 | 5% | 286 | 3% |
| 7b. Hair and Beauty | 439 | 10% | 260 | 4% | 699 | 7% |
| 7. Retail and Commercial Enterprise | 120 | 3% | 215 | 4% | 336 | 3% |
| 8. Leisure, Travel and Tourism | 469 | 10% | 272 | 5% | 742 | 7% |
| 9a. Performing Arts | 136 | 3% | 59 | 1% | 194 | 2% |
| 9b. Art and Design | 367 | 8% | 143 | 2% | 510 | 5% |
| 10. History, Philosophy and Theology | 4 | 0% | 17 | 0% | 21 | 0% |
| 11. Social Sciences | 54 | 1% | 60 | 1% | 114 | 1% |
| 12a. Welsh for Adults | 5 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 5 | 0% |
| 12b. Welsh, English and Other Languages | 78 | 2% | 30 | 1% | 108 | 1% |
| 13. Education and Training | 0 | 0% | 44 | 1% | 44 | 0% |
| 14a. Independent Living Skills | 44 | 1% | 61 | 1% | 105 | 1% |
| 14c. Foundation for Work | 589 | 13% | 1,581 | 27% | 2,170 | 21% |
| 14d. English for Speakers of Other Languages | 50 | 1% | 339 | 6% | 389 | 4% |
| 15. Business, Administration and Law | 269 | 6% | 515 | 9% | 784 | 8% |
| Grand Total | 4,484 | 100% | 5,873 | 100% | 10,356 | 100% |

*Grand Total figures have been rounded to nearest whole number.

Swansea College Proportion of Activity by Provision types

| Swansea | 16-18 | | 19+ | | All | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| | FTEs | % of cohort activity | FTEs | % of cohort activity | Grand Total* | % of cohort activity |
| General [AS/A Level/GCSE] | 405 | 9% | 132 | 2% | 538 | 5% |
| Edexcel/BTEC - vocational related | 1,467 | 33% | 280 | 5% | 1,747 | 17% |
| NVQ | 689 | 15% | 2,288 | 39% | 2,976 | 29% |
| Access Certificate/Diploma | 35 | 1% | 181 | 3% | 216 | 2% |
| OCN Credit[s] | 56 | 1% | 1,218 | 21% | 1,273 | 12% |
| Other | 1,681 | 37% | 1,755 | 30% | 3,436 | 33% |
| HE Sub-degree [HNC/HND] | 4 | 0% | 4 | 0% | 9 | 0% |
| Key Skills | 147 | 3% | 15 | 0% | 162 | 2% |
| Grand Total | 4,484 | 100% | 5,873 | 100% | 10,356 | 100% |

Swansea College Proportion of Activity by Level

| Swansea | 16-18 | | 19+ | | All | |
|--------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| | FTEs | % of cohort activity | FTEs | % of cohort activity | Grand Total* | % of cohort activity |
| Entry Level | 305 | 7% | 996 | 17% | 1,301 | 13% |
| Level 1 | 673 | 15% | 894 | 15% | 1,567 | 15% |
| Level 2 | 1,424 | 32% | 2,431 | 41% | 3,855 | 37% |
| Level 3 | 1,970 | 44% | 1,371 | 23% | 3,341 | 32% |
| Level 4+ | 7 | 0% | 69 | 1% | 76 | 1% |
| Level Not Known | 105 | 2% | 112 | 2% | 216 | 2% |
| Grand Total | 4,484 | 100% | 5,873 | 100% | 10,356 | 100% |

*Grand Total figures have been rounded to nearest whole number.

Within its FE provision and due to the substantial numbers of 19+ learners, Level 2 is the predominant level. For 16-18 year olds Level 3 provides the largest volume of activity.

The balance of provision is substantially vocationally related with nearly 1/3 pursuing NVQs and nearly 1/2 pursuing NVQ and BTEC type programmes whilst a significant proportion of 'other' courses are also directly vocational.

The college offers a varied provision including the IB and WB qualifications. A range of courses is offered within the community to address the widening participation agenda and ensure inclusion of all learners. There are over 1,000 learners on a large number of Learndirect programmes. The college as a whole attracts learners from a wide area across the UK. As would be expected, learners from wards within the Swansea Local Authority area [and in particular the east of Swansea] represent the highest proportion of participants. Outside of Swansea learners are mainly attracted from the local authority area of Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend, where wards have geographic boundaries with Swansea.

Trends in learner numbers between 2006-07 and 2007-08 are shown below:

Swansea College learner numbers

| Age band | Type | 06/07 | 07/08 |
|----------------------|------|---------------|---------------|
| 16 - 18 | FT | 983 | 949 |
| | PT | 699 | 541 |
| 16 - 18 Total | | 1,682 | 1,490 |
| 19+ | FT | 1,177 | 1,052 |
| | PT | 11,909 | 9,731 |
| 19+ Total | | 13,086 | 10,783 |
| All | FT | 2,160 | 2,001 |
| | PT | 12,608 | 10,272 |
| TOTAL | | 14,768 | 12,273 |

The college has developed strong local partnerships with a range of providers. Effective links with employers lead to the planning and provision of customised training courses and qualification routes. The Business College has developed a wide range of qualification routes to address the needs of local employers. The college provides extensive WBL programmes across a full range which includes Skill Build, Foundation Modern Apprenticeships [FMA] and Modern Apprenticeships [MA.] There are well-established working partnerships with approximately 300 local businesses ranging from large international companies to very small local businesses, with learning programmes tailored to meet employer needs such as within the NHS and the mining industry.

The college supports around 500 learners each week on its School Link programme for 14-16 year olds. This enables learners to have access to a wide range of resources and specialist staff.

The college works within a range of partnerships and networks, for example the Swansea Learning Partnership, the Swansea Skills Task Force, Sector Skills Councils, employers' groups and the 14-19 Network. The college also works in a more formal strategic alliance with Gorseinon College and the City and County of Swansea to deliver the most effective and efficient post-16 education in Swansea.

The college operates in close partnership with Swansea Metropolitan University with joint delivery of some HNC/HNDs – in particular Health and Care.

Welsh language learning and the development of Welsh culture is a key strategic priority for the college.



Gorseinon College

Gorseinon College is located in the north/west of the City and County of Swansea. The main college campus is in Gorseinon where it delivers most of its programmes. It has smaller sites, delivering Work Based Learning programmes, basic skills and creative arts courses.

The college offers FE provision in 12 learning areas. About $\frac{2}{3}$ of the full time learners currently enrolled in the college are studying AS and A Level subjects. A broad range of full time and part time courses at Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 are offered including over 50 AS Level and A Level subjects and 11 vocational pathways. The college also offers an entry level programme of Independent Living Skills for adult learners.

Gorseinon College Full Time Equivalent Learners (FTEs) and proportions by SSA

| Gorseinon | 16-18 | | 19+ | | All | |
|---|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| | FTEs | % of cohort activity | FTEs | % of cohort activity | Grand Total* | % of cohort activity |
| 1. Health, Public Services and Care | 460 | 11% | 148 | 9% | 607 | 11% |
| 2. Science and Mathematics | 721 | 18% | 27 | 2% | 748 | 13% |
| 3. Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care | 28 | 1% | 0 | 0% | 28 | 0% |
| 4. Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies | 171 | 4% | 15 | 1% | 186 | 3% |
| 6. Information and Communication Technology | 280 | 7% | 403 | 25% | 682 | 12% |
| 8. Leisure, Travel and Tourism | 128 | 3% | 5 | 0% | 133 | 2% |
| 9a. Performing Arts | 342 | 8% | 15 | 1% | 357 | 6% |
| 9b. Art and Design | 528 | 13% | 111 | 7% | 639 | 11% |
| 10. History, Philosophy and Theology | 227 | 6% | 5 | 0% | 232 | 4% |
| 11. Social Sciences | 205 | 5% | 7 | 0% | 212 | 4% |
| 12a. Welsh for Adults | 14 | 0% | 0 | 0% | 14 | 0% |
| 12b. Welsh, English and Other Languages | 294 | 7% | 18 | 1% | 311 | 5% |
| 13. Education and Training | 0 | 0% | 5 | 0% | 5 | 0% |
| 14a. Independent Living Skills | 24 | 1% | 218 | 14% | 242 | 4% |
| 14c. Foundation for Work | 311 | 8% | 572 | 36% | 883 | 16% |
| 14d. English for Speakers of Other Languages | 0 | 0% | 8 | 1% | 8 | 0% |
| 15. Business, Administration and Law | 331 | 8% | 19 | 1% | 350 | 6% |
| 16. Other | 0 | 0% | 34 | 2% | 34 | 1% |
| Grand Total | 4,066 | 100% | 1,608 | 100% | 5,674 | 100% |

*Grand Total figures have been rounded to nearest whole number.

Gorseinon College Proportion of Activity by Provision types

| Gorseinon | 16-18 | | 19+ | | All | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| | FTEs | % of cohort activity | FTEs | % of cohort activity | Grand Total* | % of cohort activity |
| General [AS/A Level/GCSE] | 2,314 | 57% | 75 | 5% | 2,390 | 42% |
| Edexcel/BTEC - vocational related | 1,166 | 29% | 44 | 3% | 1,210 | 21% |
| NVQ | 21 | 1% | 121 | 8% | 142 | 3% |
| Access Certificate/Diploma | 0 | 0% | 33 | 2% | 33 | 1% |
| OCN Credit[s] | 18 | 0% | 454 | 28% | 472 | 8% |
| Other | 260 | 6% | 842 | 52% | 1,103 | 19% |
| Key Skills | 286 | 7% | 38 | 2% | 324 | 6% |
| Grand Total | 4,066 | 100% | 1,608 | 100% | 5,674 | 100% |

Gorseinon College Proportion of Activity by Level

| Gorseinon | 16-18 | | 19+ | | All | |
|--------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| | FTEs | % of cohort activity | FTEs | % of cohort activity | Grand Total* | % of cohort activity |
| Entry Level | 42 | 1% | 267 | 17% | 308 | 5% |
| Level 1 | 99 | 2% | 495 | 31% | 594 | 10% |
| Level 2 | 513 | 13% | 305 | 19% | 818 | 14% |
| Level 3 | 3,388 | 83% | 511 | 32% | 3,900 | 69% |
| Level 4+ | 0 | 0% | 13 | 1% | 13 | 0% |
| Level Not Known | 24 | 1% | 16 | 1% | 41 | 1% |
| Grand Total | 4,066 | 100% | 1,608 | 100% | 5,674 | 100% |

*Grand Total figures have been rounded to nearest whole number.

WBL in vocational programmes is provided at Levels 1, 2 and 3. It is the only provider of Youth Justice Apprenticeships in Wales and this provision is developed with the Youth Offending Service and Employment Training Services in Swansea. HE courses, including PGCE and the Certificate and Diploma in Community Studies, are offered in partnership with HE institutions.

Most of the FE courses delivered by the college are at Levels 2 and 3 with the majority [83%] at Level 3 on 'traditional' type programmes.

The vast majority of provision is 'General' [AS/A Level] provision with EDEXCEL/BTEC programmes a significant second.

The college has partner schools from a wide geographical area. Full time learners from about 50 different secondary schools attend the college. The college draws over ¾ of full time learners from the City and County of Swansea with about 1/5 of full time learners coming from Carmarthenshire and Neath Port Talbot.

Trends in learner numbers between 2006-07 and 2007-08 are shown below:

Gorseinon College learner numbers

| Age band | Type | 06/07 | 07/08 |
|----------------------|------|--------------|--------------|
| 16 - 18 | FT | 1,604 | 1,841 |
| | PT | 150 | 171 |
| 16 - 18 Total | | 1,754 | 2,012 |
| 19+ | FT | 330 | 203 |
| | PT | 2,572 | 2,023 |
| 19+ Total | | 2,902 | 2,226 |
| All | FT | 1,934 | 2,044 |
| | PT | 2,722 | 2,194 |
| TOTAL | | 4,656 | 4,238 |

The college has developed strong local partnerships with a range of providers. Effective links with employers lead to the planning and provision of customised training courses. This is particularly evident with the college's Knowledge Transfer Partnerships [KTP.] KTPs are a UK-wide programme to encourage business/knowledge base collaborations. KTPs help businesses and organisations to improve their competitiveness and/or productivity through the use of knowledge, technology and skills that reside with academic institutions.

Within WBL, Foundation and Modern Apprenticeships are offered in Customer Services, Care and Motor Vehicle. The Modern Skills Diploma for Adults is offered in Care. In addition the college is the only local provider of the Armed Forces Preparation Course, where learners gain a real understanding of the range of career opportunities available in the forces.

The college is active in a range of partnerships and networks, for example the Swansea Learning Partnership, the Swansea Skills Task Force, Sector Skills Councils, employers' groups and the 14-19 Network. The college also works in a more formal strategic alliance with Swansea College and the City and County of Swansea to deliver the most effective and efficient post-16 education in Swansea.

A Merged College

For the 16-18 year old age group there is little difference between the colleges' levels of activity, it is for 19+ learners that Swansea College shows considerably more activity. In terms of overall volume of activity, Swansea College delivers twice the amount of FE delivery of Gorseinon.

Both colleges are successful and well-established. They are pro-active in the strategic planning and development of education and training in the Swansea area and offer largely complementary provision. The quality of their provision and services is recognised by Estyn as 'good with some outstanding' on the part of Swansea College and 'outstanding' across almost the full range at Gorseinon College. To achieve these results indicates robust quality assurance processes, responsiveness and no serious weaknesses.

A comparison of success rates by Estyn benchmarking performance [2006/07] indicates few areas for concern.

Whilst both colleges cater for a number of the same wards within Swansea their geographical spread is different. Swansea College tends to attract learners from the east, whilst Gorseinon College's catchment area is predominantly the north/west of Swansea. Combining the two colleges into a single institution would result in a more coherent provision to learners in Swansea and to those who choose to travel from outside the County.

With merger, the separate cultures and ethos of the two colleges would be combined within a single, learner-focused organisation where the new institution will continue to remain committed to responsive, innovative and high quality learning and training programmes.



9. Quality Profile

Introduction

The merged institution will be subject to external scrutiny by the WAG through Performance Provider Reviews and Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales [Estyn.]

Currently both colleges have their own quality systems that are intended to assure them and others of their ability to manage the quality of their academic and training provision and to be responsive to the external agenda for quality and standards. A degree of harmonisation will be required in order to ensure that the systems adopted are efficient and effective in providing the Corporation, Senior Managers and Team Leaders with accurate information and evidence about the quality and standards of teaching and learning.

The colleges endorse a common commitment to a culture of self-assessment for quality improvement and will be able to build upon the systems of the current colleges. Both institutions have sound strategic planning and quality assurance systems, teaching effectiveness programmes and course and programme area reviews that drive the curriculum planning, development and delivery process. It is therefore clear that the merged college can build upon the best features of the existing systems and protocols to ensure harmonisation at the earliest possible time.

Both colleges have very strong quality profiles from Estyn inspections in recent years. The outcomes of these quality assessments appear in the tables below.



Swansea College

Swansea College's latest published inspection reports were in 2006 and 2008. These indicated the following grade profile:

| Key Question | Inspection grade | |
|--|------------------|------|
| | 2006 | 2008 |
| 1 How well do learners achieve? | 2 | 1 |
| 2 How effective are teaching, training, and assessment? | 2 | 1 |
| 3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? | 2 | 1 |
| 4 How well are learners cared for, guided, and supported? | 1 | 2 |
| 5 How effective are leadership and strategic management? | 2 | 2 |
| 6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards? | 3 | 2 |
| 7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources? | 1 | 2 |

| Learning area inspected | Inspection grade | |
|--|------------------|------|
| | 2006 | 2008 |
| Science and Mathematics | 3 | N/A |
| Hair and Beauty | 1 | N/A |
| Hospitality and Catering | 1 | N/A |
| Art and Design | 2 | N/A |
| History, Philosophy and Theology | 3 | N/A |
| Social Sciences | 3 | N/A |
| Languages, Literature and Culture | 2 | N/A |
| Independent Living Skills | 1 | N/A |
| Business Administration and Law – WBL* | N/A | 1 |
| Hairdressing – WBL* | N/A | 2 |
| Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies | N/A | 1 |

* WBL = Work Based Learning

Using the Estyn 5 point scale all areas are judged as 'at least good with several outstanding.'

- "All learners have outstanding care, support and guidance from their teachers."
- "The college is highly committed to the promotion of equality and diversity."
- "The college places learners at the centre of its work."
- "The college has a clear, well-established system for improving quality and standards."
- "The college provides very good value for money."
- "The college places a high priority on improving teaching and learning across all areas of the curriculum."
- "The college works well with local partners."
- "Learners' work is assessed regularly by teachers."
- "The management style and culture within the college is open, inclusive and consultative."
- "The college provides good careers guidance."

Quality and Standards in Post-16 Education and Training in Wales - A Report on the Quality of Further Education in Swansea College [March 2006]

Gorseinon College

The college's last published inspection reports were in 2007 and 2009. These had the following grade profile:

| Key Question | Inspection grade | |
|--|------------------|------|
| | 2007 | 2009 |
| 1 How well do learners achieve? | 1 | 1 |
| 2 How effective are teaching, training, and assessment? | 1 | 1 |
| 3 How well do the learning experiences meet the needs and interests of learners and the wider community? | 1 | 1 |
| 4 How well are learners cared for, guided, and supported? | 1 | 1 |
| 5 How effective are leadership and strategic management? | 1 | 1 |
| 6 How well do leaders and managers evaluate and improve quality and standards? | 1 | 1 |
| 7 How efficient are leaders and managers in using resources? | 1 | 2 |

| Learning area inspected | Inspection grade | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------|
| | 2007 | 2009 |
| 01 Health, Public Services and Care | 1 | 1 |
| 08a Leisure, Travel and Tourism | 1 | N/A |
| 14a Independent Living Skills | 1 | N/A |
| Engineering (Motor Vehicle) - WBL | N/A | 2 |
| Skillbuild - WBL | N/A | 1 |
| Business Administration - WBL | N/A | 1 |

* WBL = Work Based Learning

Using the Estyn 5 point scale 13 out of 14 areas received the judgement of 'outstanding.'

- "The quality of teaching, training and assessment overall is outstanding"
- "Teachers have high expectations of learners."
- "They [teachers] give learners thorough and helpful written and oral feedback on tasks and assignments to help them to improve."
- "Many learners take part in the college's excellent range of additional activities and community events that enrich their learning."
- "The college cares for, guides and supports learners very well."
- "It has a strong ethos which values and supports learners."
- "The college has a comprehensive range of learner support mechanisms."
- "They [the management] have established a college culture and ethos that clearly put the standards achieved by learners and the quality of learners' experiences at the centre of all their work."
- "The college system to assure and develop quality is comprehensive and rigorous."
- "The college provides outstanding value for money."

Quality and Standards in Post-16 Education and Training in Wales – A Report on the Quality of Further Education in Gorseinon College [March 2007]

Conclusion

It can, therefore, be concluded that bringing the two organisations together will create an even stronger single institution which will have the opportunity to create financial surpluses which can be re-invested into the curriculum to maintain and improve the quality of resources as well as teaching and learning. This should assist continuous and sustained success in the overall quality of learning and training experience within the new college.



10. Governance and Management

Introduction

Since the publication of the Webb Review, Promise and Performance: The Report of the Independent Review of the Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales in the context of the Learning Country: Vision into Action both corporations have considered and explored a range of possible collaboration models.

Both corporations recognise that undertaking a two-way merger is the most pragmatic response. However, they also recognise that moving to a single FE institution for the City and County of Swansea is only part, albeit an important part, of the solution that needs to be put in place in the longer term to address fully the challenges laid down in Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales.



Governance

The Governors of both colleges have approached the merger in a spirit of openness and collaboration. They have formed a Governors' Merger Steering Group to manage the merger process. This group meets regularly in order to discuss ongoing issues relating to the merger.

This merger is not being precipitated by a failure at either of the institutions. Rather it is a mature response to the future policy agenda of two strong institutions who see the importance of putting the needs of learners, employers and communities before the needs of the individual institutions.

Consequently both institutions are concerned that this merger, if it goes ahead, should not only be seen as a merger of equals but should also be structured and organised to reflect this important principle.

Governance of the merged institution will be underpinned by two key principles:

Key Principle 1

Both Corporations would be dissolved and a new entity formed which would provide both institutions with an equal opportunity to influence, manage and shape the new merged organisation

Both Corporations understand the importance of the principle of equity and that dissolution of both existing legal entities and the transfer of their assets and liabilities to the new Corporation will best reflect the equity principle into the new merged college.

Key Principle 2

It is proposed that the new Governing Body would be made up of an equal number of members of the former Governing Bodies of the two institutions together with three new members who have no prior involvement with either college. The Chair of the new Governing Body will be elected by and from the board members.

Senior management capacity and capability

This merger will create the second largest college in Wales, operating on at least two major sites and across a wide geographical area. The curriculum offer will be wide and deep. The relationships and partnerships needed for success will be numerous, diverse and significant not just to the new college, but also to many other important stakeholders. As a result, the success of the merger will be linked to the capabilities and capacity of the existing Senior Managers to be able to absorb this additional workload on top of keeping the existing focus on delivering high quality learning experiences for current learners.

All Senior Managers in both institutions are fully committed to developing a new college based on a merger of Swansea and Gorseinon Colleges. This is an important commitment which will require a great deal of energy and resources to ensure a successful merger.

The external inspections of the colleges by Estyn have praised the quality of leadership and management in both institutions. As with governance, the management of the colleges has also been awarded either Grade 1 or 2 for this Key Question. Sufficient expertise, experience and capability exist amongst the Senior Management teams in both colleges to ensure the successful planning and implementation of the proposed merger.



11. Human Resource Planning

Introduction

The Corporations of both colleges recognise that staff are the key resource for the merged college and that both sets of staff will be crucial to its success. The merger will create greater opportunities for staff career development and progression with a larger college which has greater breadth and depth to the curriculum on offer.

Communication is a key issue in allaying staff fears or uncertainties as well as enabling matters of difference to be resolved quickly. The two colleges have made a good start with this. Once transition is underway and a period of stability reached, increases in staff confidence, morale and job satisfaction should become evident. In addition, a cultural change will be needed to unite the merged college and to break down barriers between different groups of staff. Consultation, communication and a staff development programme will all be important in making the cultural changes required.

Current position

In 2007/08 Swansea College directly employed about 444 full-time equivalent [FTE] teaching staff, at a direct cost of about £12.7m. There were also about 189 FTE non-teaching staff. The total expenditure on staff was about £17.7m, 69.1% of the college's income.

Gorseinon College employed about 213 FTE teaching staff and 104 FTE non-teaching staff in 2007/08. Teaching staff cost about £6.6m in the year and total staff costs were about £9.4m, 74.1% of total college income.

Staffing Structures

There are a number of key differences in the terms and conditions of service at both colleges and resolving those differences will not be an easy task.

Whilst there may be an opportunity to harmonise some conditions of service when the merged college is established, the requirements of TUPE [Transfer of Undertakings and Protection of Employment] rights will apply and the Corporation will be mindful of the obligations of the college under the European Acquired Rights Directive.

Both colleges have established pay scales for lecturers, management and support staff. There are no significant variations in the scale points. The similarities in the pay structures will help to facilitate a merger as harmonisation of the pay structures will be minimal. However, whilst the pay scales are broadly similar it is evident that there is considerable variation in the breadth and depth of the jobs.

Both colleges operate the Teachers' Pension scheme and the Local Government Pension scheme that is administered by the City and County of Swansea for both colleges.

Leadership and management

This issue is fundamental to a successful merger. It will be of vital importance that a Principal is appointed as quickly as possible to lead the new institution. Consideration will also need to be given to the creation of a new Executive Management Team [EMT] and Senior Management Team [SMT.]

One of the substantial differences between the two colleges is the approach taken to the management of the curriculum. With merger, it will become necessary for the new college to seek to overcome the current differences in management structure and styles. This will require an extensive process of change management.

In general, although there are differences in structure across curriculum delivery and HR, these are not such that they become barriers to a successful implementation of merger. Nevertheless, staff and learner consultation has provided evidence that in particular the cultural differences between the two colleges, with respect to delivery and management, need careful consideration and sensitive handling.

12. Estates

Introduction

Both Swansea and Gorseinon Colleges have one main campus and a number of satellite sites each within their respective part of the Swansea and Gorseinon area. Swansea College currently has six satellite sites and Gorseinon College has four.

Both colleges have some site development either planned or in progress within the boundaries of their main campuses.

The table below lists the campuses with their floor area and outlines the curriculum delivered from each. The main campus accommodation of both colleges is freehold with the satellite sites being a mixture of freehold and leasehold.



| | Campus | Area GIA | Curriculum |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| Swansea College | Tycoch Campus including Broadway (freehold) | 16,295 m ² | Humanities, Mathematics and Science, ESOL, Hair and Beauty, Sport, Leisure, Tourism, Hospitality and Catering, Business and Management, Engineering and IT |
| | Sketty Hall (leasehold) | 1,818 m ² | Business and Management |
| | Llwyn y Bryn (freehold) | 4,793 m ² | Visual and Performing Arts |
| | Kingsway Centre (leasehold) | 2,132 m ² | ESOL, Adult Basic Education |
| | Business College (leasehold) | 1,089 m ² | Employer Engagement, ICT and Engineering test centre |
| | Stadium House – Hafod (leasehold) | 359 m ² | Supported Studies |
| | Cefn Hengoed Community School (leasehold) | 760 m ² | Hair and Beauty, Retail, IT, CAD and Motor Vehicle Studies |
| Gorseinon College | Belgrave Road Campus (freehold) | 13,770 m ² | Science and Services to People, Business Leisure and IT, Creative Arts and Humanities and Lifelong Learning |
| | Kingsbridge Centre (leasehold) | 1,174 m ² | Work Based Learning and Motor Vehicle Maintenance and Repair |
| | Gorseinon Centre Bryngwyn (rented accommodation) | 192 m ² | Creative Arts |
| | Lifelong Learning Centre (freehold) | 490 m ² | Basic Skills, Adult Learning |
| | Canolfan Y Bont | 374 m ² | Basic Skills, Adult Learning |

Swansea College

The Swansea College Estates Strategy concludes that there is a strong rationale for some site consolidation and a new single site would address the issues of location, duplication, diseconomies of scale and inequalities in the standard of provision from site to site.

A new single site would also deliver high profile, modern and versatile facilities and, if sized appropriately, would allow some rationalisation of the existing satellite campuses such as Llwyn y Bryn, Sketty Hall and the Business College.

Feasibility investigations indicate that new site opportunities may figure in the City and County of Swansea's city centre regeneration plans. To date, the college has sought to minimise investment expenditure on the existing estate during the period, especially on the satellite sites.

The probable, extended timetable for the proposed city centre college means that some investment may be required in the existing estate during the interim 'strategy' period to enable the college to meet its priority short-to-medium term needs.

Gorseinon College

The preferred option of Gorseinon College's Estates Strategy to develop the Gorseinon estate is to combine all 16-18 activities onto the Belgrave Road campus. With the completion of the Motor Vehicle Workshop in June 2009, this objective will have been achieved.

The college has gradually been moving away from temporary and other poor quality accommodation towards buildings that are either new or refurbished and adapted for their current purpose. One of the key aims for the college is to remove and replace the remaining five demountables and to refurbish areas of the main building that are currently in poor condition.

The college has recently applied for planning permission to build a two storey teaching block to replace these demountables.



Opportunities for Potential Rationalisation of the Estate and Efficiency Savings

Both college Estate Strategies include areas where redevelopment of main sites and rationalisation is suggested for satellite campuses.

It is apparent that each college has particular facilities that are considered to be better developed and of higher quality than those provided by the other college. These included, for example, the Engineering workshops at Swansea College and the Arts and Technology Centre at Gorseinon College.

Some capital costs would arise in undertaking the development necessary for any rationalisation and relocation. However significant capital and revenue savings would also result from any disposals because of the reduction of operating costs, maintenance costs and capital required for backlog maintenance.

There are also a significant number of maintenance contracts let by each college on an annual basis. If the contracts were combined upon amalgamation, savings would almost certainly result due to the economies of scale.

City Centre Campus

A city centre campus has been a key Estates Strategy for Swansea College for a number of years. The college has been working with the City and County of Swansea and the WAG to identify a suitable site and ensure its deliverability.

Moreover, as part of a merged entity, a city centre campus is even more imperative to deliver the learning opportunities for the whole of Swansea. A college serving the learners of Swansea deserves the prominence of a major city centre site.

The benefits of a city centre campus to the new college would be to address the issues of both colleges including multiple sites [diseconomies of scale, duplication of services, inequalities in provision] and the issues surrounding the current sites:-

- Both current main sites are located in the north/west of Swansea – the east of Swansea is not adequately serviced
- Inflexibility of existing sites – limited expansion opportunities
- Condition of some sites [especially satellite sites]

The long term aim of the new college is to be located on two main sites – one in Gorseinon and one in the city centre. This will enable the college to serve all of the learners of Swansea.

Not only will a city centre campus be of benefit to the new college but it will also assist the City and County of Swansea in their regeneration of the city centre.

The city centre campus would be an iconic attraction to existing and new learners.

Whilst the merger is not dependent on a new city centre campus, the full benefits of the merger cannot be realised within the colleges' current estate.

13. Financial Indicators

Introduction

The prime rationale for merger is not a financial one. Whilst certain financial conditions need to be met for a merger to be feasible, neither college is in a situation where it has to merge with the other from a financial perspective.

In accordance with guidance from DCELLS the colleges' financial health has been assessed into one of four categories:

- Category A - The institution's financial position and its financial strategy fully support the institutional plan.
- Category B - The institution's financial position and its financial strategy currently support the institutional plan but could be strengthened.
- Category C - The institution's financial position or its financial strategy require improvement to support the institutional plan.
- Category D - The institution's financial position is weak and does not support its financial strategy or the institutional plan.

The latest audited financial data available is for the colleges' financial year 1st August 2007 to 31st July 2008.

The current and future financial stability of each institution can be viewed through the historical financial records of each college and through a review of the colleges' respective financial forecasts.



Swansea College

A summary of Swansea College's financial statements for the last three full audited financial years, together with the forecast for the period ending 31st July 2012, is set out below. Swansea College has consistently received unqualified external audit reports on its financial statements and regularity audits. Its financial health is category A.

Swansea College's income and expenditure account for the last three full financial years is set out below.

The college has a relatively strong balance sheet, including £6.0 million in general reserves [after deducting the long term pension liability.] Historically, the college has maintained a healthy level of current assets and the balance sheet suggest no immediate solvency issues.



Income and Expenditure Account, Swansea College

| | Actual | | | Forecast | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Income | | | | | | | |
| WAG grants | 19,409 | 19,895 | 19,415 | 19,973 | 19,576 | 19,603 | 19,575 |
| Other income | 6,121 | 5,869 | 6,271 | 6,237 | 4,868 | 4,924 | 4,567 |
| | 25,530 | 25,764 | 25,686 | 26,210 | 24,444 | 24,527 | 24,142 |
| Expenditure | | | | | | | |
| Staff costs | 17,128 | 19,884 | 17,971 | 17,871 | 16,839 | 17,133 | 17,035 |
| Other operating costs | 6,903 | 5,969 | 5,884 | 6,348 | 5,962 | 6,046 | 5,846 |
| Depreciation | 1,274 | 1,192 | 1,466 | 1,213 | 1,272 | 1,237 | 1,178 |
| Interest | 134 | 170 | 104 | 340 | 360 | 30 | 30 |
| | 25,439 | 27,215 | 25,425 | 25,772 | 24,433 | 24,446 | 24,089 |
| Surplus/(deficit) on continuing operations | 91 | (1,451) | 261 | 438 | 11 | 81 | 53 |
| Profit/(loss) on disposal of fixed assets | 1 | (134) | (6) | - | - | - | - |
| Historic depreciation adjustment | 172 | 173 | 172 | 172 | 172 | 172 | 172 |
| Historic retained surplus | 264 | (1,412) | 427 | 610 | 183 | 253 | 225 |

Balance Sheet, Swansea College

| | Actual | | | Forecast | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 31 July 2006 | 31 July 2007 | 31 July 2008 | 31 July 2009 | 31 July 2010 | 31 July 2011 | 31 July 2012 |
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Fixed assets (net) | 17,995 | 17,933 | 17,647 | 17,925 | 17,437 | 16,999 | 15,265 |
| Net current assets | 5,478 | 5,136 | 4,982 | 5,631 | 6,108 | 6,295 | 7,481 |
| Creditors(>1year) and other provisions | (1,963) | (2,759) | (1,860) | (1,860) | (1,850) | (1,840) | (1,830) |
| Net pension liability | (4,913) | (3,860) | (5,640) | (5,870) | (6,229) | (6,229) | (6,229) |
| Net assets | 16,597 | 16,450 | 15,129 | 15,826 | 15,466 | 15,225 | 14,687 |
| Financed by: | | | | | | | |
| Income and expenditure account | 12,137 | 11,002 | 11,629 | 12,482 | 13,008 | 13,260 | 13,486 |
| Less: pension reserve | (4,913) | (3,860) | (5,640) | (5,870) | (6,229) | (6,229) | (6,229) |
| | 7,224 | 7,142 | 5,989 | 6,612 | 6,779 | 7,031 | 7,257 |
| Revaluation reserve | 6,923 | 6,750 | 6,578 | 6,406 | 6,234 | 6,062 | 5,890 |
| Deferred capital grants | 2,450 | 2,558 | 2,562 | 2,808 | 2,453 | 2,132 | 1,540 |
| Total reserves | 16,597 | 16,450 | 15,129 | 15,826 | 15,466 | 15,225 | 14,687 |

Gorseinon College

A summary of Gorseinon College's financial statements for the last three full audited financial years, together with the forecast for the period ending 31st July 2012, is set out below. Gorseinon College has consistently received unqualified external audit reports on its financial statements and regularity audits. Its financial health is category B.

Although the college has low general reserves [after deducting the long term pension liability] at the end of 2008 [£29k net], it has positive net current assets, including cash, and has historically demonstrated its capacity to handle a relatively tight financial position.



Income and Expenditure Account, Gorseinon College

| | Actual | | | Forecast | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 |
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Income | | | | | | | |
| WAG grants | 9,444 | 9,336 | 9,513 | 10,298 | 10,309 | 10,293 | 10,289 |
| Other income | 3,479 | 3,534 | 3,166 | 2,751 | 2,756 | 2,788 | 2,821 |
| | 12,923 | 12,870 | 12,679 | 13,049 | 13,065 | 13,081 | 13,110 |
| Expenditure | | | | | | | |
| Staff costs | 8,861 | 9,421 | 9,490 | 10,020 | 9,722 | 9,787 | 9,838 |
| Other operating costs | 3,228 | 2,714 | 2,484 | 2,577 | 2,673 | 2,665 | 2,681 |
| Depreciation | 698 | 653 | 648 | 631 | 651 | 608 | 557 |
| Interest | 99 | 132 | 88 | 24 | 11 | 10 | 10 |
| | 12,886 | 12,920 | 12,710 | 13,252 | 13,057 | 13,070 | 13,086 |
| Surplus/(deficit) on continuing operations | 37 | (50) | (31) | (203) | 8 | 11 | 24 |
| Profit on disposal of fixed assets | 348 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Historic depreciation adjustment | 59 | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 | 77 |
| Prior year property revaluation gains | 622 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Historic retained surplus | 1,066 | 27 | 46 | (126) | 85 | 88 | 101 |

Balance Sheet, Gorseinon College

| | Actual | | | Forecast | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | 31 July 2006 | 31 July 2007 | 31 July 2008 | 31 July 2009 | 31 July 2010 | 31 July 2011 | 31 July 2012 |
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Fixed assets | 10,497 | 10,599 | 11,183 | 12,544 | 12,128 | 11,753 | 11,428 |
| Net current assets | 2,121 | 1,003 | 834 | 480 | 720 | 901 | 1,051 |
| Creditors(>1year) and other provisions | (2,272) | (1,303) | (1,318) | (1,644) | (1,580) | (1,490) | (1,402) |
| Net pension liability | (2,060) | (1,700) | (2,360) | (2,360) | (2,360) | (2,360) | (2,360) |
| Net assets | 8,286 | 8,599 | 8,339 | 9,020 | 8,908 | 8,804 | 8,717 |
| Financed by: | | | | | | | |
| Income and expenditure account | 2,126 | 2,263 | 2,389 | 2,263 | 2,348 | 2,436 | 2,537 |
| Less: pension reserve | (2,060) | (1,700) | (2,360) | (2,360) | (2,360) | (2,360) | (2,360) |
| | 66 | 563 | 29 | (97) | (12) | 76 | 177 |
| Revaluation reserve | 4,669 | 4,592 | 4,515 | 4,438 | 4,361 | 4,284 | 4,207 |
| Deferred capital grants | 3,551 | 3,444 | 3,795 | 4,679 | 4,559 | 4,444 | 4,333 |
| Total reserves | 8,286 | 8,599 | 8,339 | 9,020 | 8,908 | 8,804 | 8,717 |

(NB: From 2008/09 to 2011/12 the figures for Gorseinon College exclude FRS 17 adjustments.)

Financial Benefits of the Merger

The merged institution would have a potential combined turnover of approximately £38m by the end of 2010/11. This would result in a financially strong and healthy college able to make efficient use of all resources and invest in the future of learners in the locality.

It is anticipated that cost savings will accrue from improvement in space utilisation and in more efficient use of available resources and estates.

The FE sector is facing significant funding challenges in the short to medium term. The current funding methodology favours 16-18 year old learning activity which has been Gorseinon Colleges' traditional focus whereas Swansea College has strong 19+ and commercial provision. In bringing together the two colleges, it is anticipated that a more robust institution will be created. The more diverse mix of learners may offer some protection against future changes in the funding methodology.

This financially robust institution will have the opportunity to create greater surpluses on the income and expenditure account which can then be reinvested in curriculum resources for the benefits of current and future learners.

Financial Costs of the Merger

Broadly speaking and assuming that the approach adopted is a gradual one, the main cost items resulting from the merger will relate to severance arising from rationalisation of management teams as well as severance or early retirement arrangements if opportunities to rationalise the curriculum are identified. There will also be costs associated with harmonisation of staff pay and conditions [although, given the proximity of the colleges, staff relocation costs will not be a significant issue.] Additionally, costs will arise out of migrating data from one college's systems to the other [or acquisition of new systems as appropriate], and the consequent need for re-training. The rationalisation and refurbishment of office and teaching facilities, dependent on decisions yet to be made, will incur further expense as will possible increases in depreciation charges [if a decision is made to revalue the buildings for either or both of the colleges.] Legal, financial and other professional costs that will be incurred in due diligence, asset valuation, HR issues, dissolution of the existing colleges and incorporation of the new college is another significant likely cost.



14. Marketing

Introduction

The merged college will develop an integrated marketing strategy which is aimed at improving and enhancing participation levels and which plays its part in addressing the needs of hard to reach groups within the City and County of Swansea. The college will develop a clearly defined marketing strategy which will be differentiated to meet the needs of learners and non-learners from across the area, taking into account different community needs and associated local and national agendas. In order to ensure that the provision of the merged college resonates with the agenda of key stakeholders and partners, the college will consult with a wide group of stakeholders in order to ensure that the new marketing strategy meets the needs of the City and County of Swansea and beyond. The merged college will also put in place initiatives which are aimed at improving working relationships with existing partners and employers within the area, in order to ensure that the college will be best placed to make the best use of new and existing market opportunities which may be developed as a result of the merger. The merged college will make use of the labour market intelligence, demographic trends and patterns. The current market share of the existing separate organisations will be utilised in order to develop the marketing strategies further.

Re-Branding and Re-Positioning

The merged college will undertake further market research to build upon the work already undertaken with regard to the branding strategy for the new organisation. This will build upon the themes of the merger which centre around the significant strengths both colleges have in curriculum planning and delivery, the parity of esteem of the existing organisations and the opportunity which the merger presents to bring significant change to post-16 education in Swansea.

In bringing forward the merger proposal the Governing Bodies of both colleges have agreed to consult on a new name for the merged institution. Since the respective strengths and specialisms from both colleges, along with best practice in terms of teaching, systems and processes, will be brought together, the new merged college should have a name and branding that reflects these principles and which ideally reflects an element of the existing identity of the two colleges. As noted above, a separate consultation has been undertaken to determine the name of the new college.

It is recognised that the merger presents a unique opportunity to promote the merged college and consequently a comprehensive relaunch programme will involve strategic publicity with carefully structured PR opportunities. The positioning of the merged college within the 14-19 schools' agenda will be undertaken in a collaborative and supportive manner to build closer working relationships with partners, which it is hoped will lead to effective progression routes and increased recruitment, retention and achievement particularly amongst the hard to reach groups.

Curriculum Portfolio Development

A major consideration for the merged college will be re-defining the curriculum portfolio and delivery to ensure the development of growth opportunities including courses suitable for new and existing students. In developing the curriculum portfolio the merged college will ensure that a suitably wide range of programmes is offered which positions the organisation effectively in targeted and niche markets for developed growth. The college will focus on curriculum developments in the areas of most need including targeting programmes at hard to reach learners and those who currently fall within the NEETS group.

The merged college will provide a complete offer which will be constructed to provide an attractive 'whole college' experience for potential learners, which ranges from entry level to Level 5 and which will be segmented to meet the needs of a variety of learners. This enhanced student experience will be more effectively reached through the resource base of an enlarged, merged institution.



15. Consultation and the Merger Process

| | |
|----------------|---|
| September 2008 | Executive management in both colleges undertake a risk analysis on options in response to WAG's Transformation Agenda [September 2008.] |
| October 2008 | Both Corporations establish a 'Merger Steering Group' comprising three Executive Managers and three Governors from each college. They agree to commission a feasibility study to examine the notion of a merger between the two colleges. |
| November 2008 | TRIBAL consultancy is commissioned to undertake a feasibility study including consultation with stakeholders within and outside the colleges. Senior Managers and Governors meet with members and officers from City and County of Swansea to discuss broader transformation across Swansea. Agree to submit a proposal for the review of post-16 education in the area to DCELLS. |
| January 2009 | TRIBAL delivers its feasibility report to governors. A Strategic Outline Proposal [SOP], the first of a number of formal documents to DCELLS, is submitted to the Department which proposes a merger. A separate SOP is submitted by City and County of Swansea on its sixth form provision. |
| February 2009 | Governors formally discuss the findings of the feasibility study. |
| March 2009 | Governors formally accept the recommendation for merger subject to due diligence, public consultation and ministerial approval. Formal approval of the SOP by DCELLS. |
| April 2009 | Feedback on SOP and further guidance on the process for merger from DCELLS. PricewaterhouseCoopers and Morgan Cole appointed as consultants to undertake due diligence studies. |
| May 2009 | Tribal is commissioned to prepare a Strategic Outline Case. The public consultation process is agreed. IC Marketing is appointed to undertake a branding exercise for the merged college. |
| July 2009 | Governors receive due diligence reports. IC Marketing feeds back on branding exercise. |
| September 2009 | Consultants present draft Strategic Outline Case to Corporation Boards. Public Consultation carried out. Union, Full Staff and Student Consultations commence. |
| October 2009 | Final Strategic Outline Case presented to Corporation Boards. A provisional 'shadow board' is established for the new college. A Chair Designate of the new Board is appointed. The process for appointing a Principal and Senior Post Holders is agreed. |
| November 2009 | Final, formal proposals and Strategic Outline Case for merger is submitted to DCELLS. |
| December 2009 | DCELLS considers formal proposals |
| January 2010 | DCELLS post statutory notice [40 days.] |
| March 2010 | DCELLS put forward formal submission to the Minister. Minister lays statutory instruments [40 days.] |
| May 2010 | Merger formally approved. |
| July 2010 | Swansea College and Gorseinon College Corporations dissolve. |
| August 2010 | New legal entity formed. |

Appendix i: Criteria for DCELLS' Approval of Merger Proposals

The criteria that DCELLS will use to evaluate plans to transform education and training delivery are set out below. The criteria will be used by the two colleges to develop plans and reflect the benefits any potential transformation will need to address.

(i) The strategic fit, which demonstrates:

- the rationale for the transformation, including the desired timeframe for implementation and the anticipated outcome;
- the effect of the change on provision outside that which is provided by the Learning Partnership;
- learner benefits envisaged; and
- the contribution towards economic regeneration, social justice and sustainability.

(ii) Improvements for learners, which includes:

- plans for a range and breadth of provision which meets evidenced need, including access to high quality programmes via modern technologies;
- development of employment and learning opportunities especially for young people who are not in education, employment or training [NEETS], the economically inactive and low skilled target groups;
- provision of equality of access to education and training programmes for learners wherever they live, addressing travel to learn issues as appropriate; and
- links with associated community services and facilities such as health care, leisure, and the arts.

(iii) Improvements for employers and the local economy, which includes:

- account of employer and local economy needs;
- improvements in relevance, efficiency, breadth and quality of provision in meeting identified sector skill needs; and
- development of shared specialist facilities, where appropriate, which again meet identified sector priorities.

iv) Cost effectiveness, long term sustainability and financial benefits, to demonstrate:

- reduction of unnecessary overlap and duplication of provision;
- the achievement of costed synergies;
- improved efficiencies in school sixth forms operating with fewer than 150 students; and in FE institutions operating with an annual turnover of less than £15 million;
- investment in provision that meets demand and will provide a learning environment that is fully fit for purpose;
- viability of provision and impact on learning providers not part of the Learning Partnership;
- improvements in the use of recurrent funding;
- the use of ICT learning platforms to improve efficiency and effectiveness of delivery, and how technology is scalable, compatible and capable of supporting future collaborations;
- consideration of the impact of changes on space utilisation; and implications for financial health of participating schools, local FE institutions and other providers.

(v) Acceptability and impact of the proposal in the context of the constituent local authorities, community learning, FE institutions, HE institutions and WBL providers as well as DCELLS. This should include:

- evidence that key stakeholders are in agreement with the proposal submitted and due consideration has been given to the potential impact of the proposal on individual providers, including 11-16 maintained school provision, WBL provision and community learning; and
- an inclusive impact assessment.

(vi) **Provision of high quality learning**, to demonstrate:

- improved consistency in standards between providers within and across sectors;
- making the best use of available resources to provide a world class education and training system, meeting global and intermediate targets for Level 2 and 3 achievements;
- building on good practice and outstanding achievements already demonstrated within the locality/region;
- supporting the improvement of Estyn inspection grades for individual and partnership provision;
- clear strategies, targets and action plans to ensure that learning provision reaches at least a 'good' standard with an aspiration towards achieving excellence;
- safeguarding and enhancing the quality of teaching and the learner experience; and
- improvements in the effectiveness of strategic planning and quality assurance.

(vii) **Enhancement of Welsh language and bilingual provision**, to demonstrate:

- improvements in amount and range of Welsh-medium provision available through network reconfiguration within local authority areas or across local authority boundaries where appropriate;
- clear post-16-18 progression routes and options through the medium of Welsh or bilingually in FE, WBL and school sixth form provision, as appropriate;
- improvements in the number and range of options offered through the medium of Welsh or bilingually, by institution and the partnership, as appropriate; and
- the positive effect that the proposal will have on the range and quality of Welsh-medium opportunities for learners.

(viii) **Demonstrate improvements in equality and diversity**.

This should include:

- consideration of the impact of the proposed collaborative model to reach under-represented groups;
- improved opportunities available to all young people and adults particularly those under-represented groups; and
- management and governance arrangements to promote and sustain equality and diversity.

(ix) **Management and Governance arrangements**, to demonstrate:

- the commitment of partners to the sustainability of the initiative; the means by which the collaborative partnership will operate to deliver year-on-year improvements for learners; and
- the effective management of performance including the use of self-assessment, risk management and contingency plans.

(x) **Demonstration of anticipated sources of funding to facilitate the proposal**, to include:

- use of recurrent and capital budgets;
- sale of assets where functions will move to a new learning infrastructure;
- contributions from local authorities, FE institutions, HE institutions and WEFO;
- prudential and institutional borrowing;
- use of appropriate third party funding streams; and
- potential submissions to WAG funding streams.

Appendix ii: Organisations Contacted in this Consultation Exercise

Assembly Members
Association of Colleges
Awarding Bodies
Better Swansea Partnership
Careers Wales West
City and County of Swansea
Community Groups
Diocesan Boards
Emergency Services
Employer Representative Groups
Estyn
Existing Contractors
Fforwm
Headteachers
HEFCW
Jobcentre Plus
Learndirect
Local County Councils
Local FE colleges
Local universities

Members of Parliament [Wales]
Members of the Public
National Training Federation
Parents of present and potential students
Reaching Higher, Reaching Wider Steering Group
Regional Learning Partnership
Sector Skills Councils
Staff of Swansea and Gorseinon Colleges
Students of Swansea and Gorseinon Colleges
SCVS
Swansea 14-19 Network
Swansea Economic Regeneration Partnership
Swansea Futures
Swansea Learning Partnership
Swansea Skills Task Force
Unions
Universities (franchised courses)
Voluntary Organisations
Welsh Language Board
Welsh Local Government Association
Young People's Partnership

