



## Consortia Gwella Ysgolion Rhanbarthol Regional School Improvement Consortia

### 4 regions' response to the CYPE investigation into the provision of text books and learning resources

It is important to note that text books and other published learning resources should not be the key driver in delivering effective teaching and learning in schools. :

Teachers in schools will use a wide range of resources including those developed by themselves, other teachers and the consortia.

As four consortia we would not encourage schools to use text books as their main resource but to use their professional judgment about what is best for the pupils they are teaching and employ the best teaching methods to secure progress for their pupils.

#### Responses to questions as asked by the CYPE:

#### Whether there is a shortage of the necessary Welsh-medium, or English- medium, text books or learning resources, for pupils in Wales undertaking their GCSEs and A levels;

There has been a shortage of resources for Welsh medium schools. This is usually due to the delay in the translation of Welsh medium text books and resources. At times, this has been 18 months after the publication of the English medium resources. Schools are asking for high quality bilingual resources that are released simultaneously.

This may be something beyond the control of WJEC but teachers do continue to express concerns.

As regions we ensure all resources are available bilingually.

#### Whether there are any shortages or issues in any particular subjects;

There has been an issue with the availability of resources and in particular the Sample Assessment Materials for a wide range of subjects including the core subjects. In particular issues have been raised around science and the humanities subjects.

WJEC did not make as many Sample Assessment Materials available as schools would have liked early on in the reform process. At times the sample assessment materials were provided with incorrect mark schemes.

There have been reported delays in the publication of textbooks and resources for RE and Geography. RE teachers have confirmed delays and yet the eduqas branch of WJEC has produced these for England. RE has been more significant at A level and geography at GCSE.

The key request from schools is that More Sample materials be provided.



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### **Whether you believe any of the reported difficulties will have/has had an impact on pupil outcomes;**

The quality of the textbooks is, at best, variable. If the reason outcomes in a school is lack of appropriate text books then we would have concerns about the quality of teaching in that centre. In centres with non-specialist teachers, the issue may be more acute.

However, it is worth noting that the lack of SAMs and text books could have an impact on pupil outcomes where the creation of resources from scratch is placing further demands on teachers' time. This time could be spent further on tracking of and differentiating resources for pupils.

### **Your confidence in the availability of resources and textbooks in future, given the increasing distinctiveness of the Welsh curriculum;**

This is difficult to answer at this stage as the curriculum is currently in development. However, text books for current specifications are of variable quality. In the new curriculum we would not expect to see common text books in schools. One of the key aims of the curriculum for Wales is that it provides teachers with the autonomy to ensure effective learning experiences for pupils.

Resources developed for the new curriculum would need to be developed by publishers with a good understanding of the new curriculum. In addition, resources should be available originally written in either Welsh or English. Often, translated materials are not of the same quality as those written in the language of the author. Therefore, it is imperative that simultaneous bilingual authoring of any new text books is a criteria for the tendering process. As a bilingual nation our key priority is for simultaneous release to the English medium and Welsh medium sectors.

### **The role of the WJEC and Qualifications Wales in ensuring the adequate provision of resources;**

There is a need to ensure that the QA process is rigorous before any endorsement is given. English Language text books endorsed by the WJEC still have errors in them and send the wrong messages about certain skills tested by the new specification.

There is a risk that schools will often see these books as a quick fix in terms of provision, particularly if they are accompanied with an online, interactive system. These are rarely used effectively by schools.



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In addition, external companies publish resources where the mark schemes are often misleading/incorrect and can misinform schools. It would be useful to make clear where resources such as these are **not** endorsed by examination bodies

### **Any other thoughts or comments on the provision of learning resources in Wales.**

It would be useful to consider if WJEC provide enough CPD on approaches to developing teaching to deliver new specifications effectively.

Is there an opportunity for more than just the exam feedback sessions and sample answers on a national level?

In particular, schools have complained about the availability of resources for the new A Levels. The level of input of CPD provided by the exam body for the new A levels has not always been sufficient and in some cases schools would appreciate additional support from the WJEC.

The WJEC need to have an equitable approach for subject officers to be available to deliver sessions in Network meetings for each subject. This only happens in some subjects.