

International Education Strategic Framework



World Class Wales

Transforming Learning for Success
in a Globalised World



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Why the need for an International Education Strategic Framework?



The arrival of China and India as major economic and political powers, climate change, technological advances, unprecedented mobility and an ageing population are all affecting our society and our economy, on a scale exceeding anything since the Industrial Revolution. Furthermore, the severity of the current financial crisis adds an exceptional degree of unpredictability about our short-term future.

These changes are placing unprecedented demands on all sectors of our society and economy, increasingly altering the way we live and work. Never before has our nation's educational and skills abilities faced such competition or challenge. But never before, have such opportunities also lain before us. Enabling Wales to become resilient enough to face the challenges ahead and creative enough to exploit the opportunities available, will require a radical new approach from all of us.

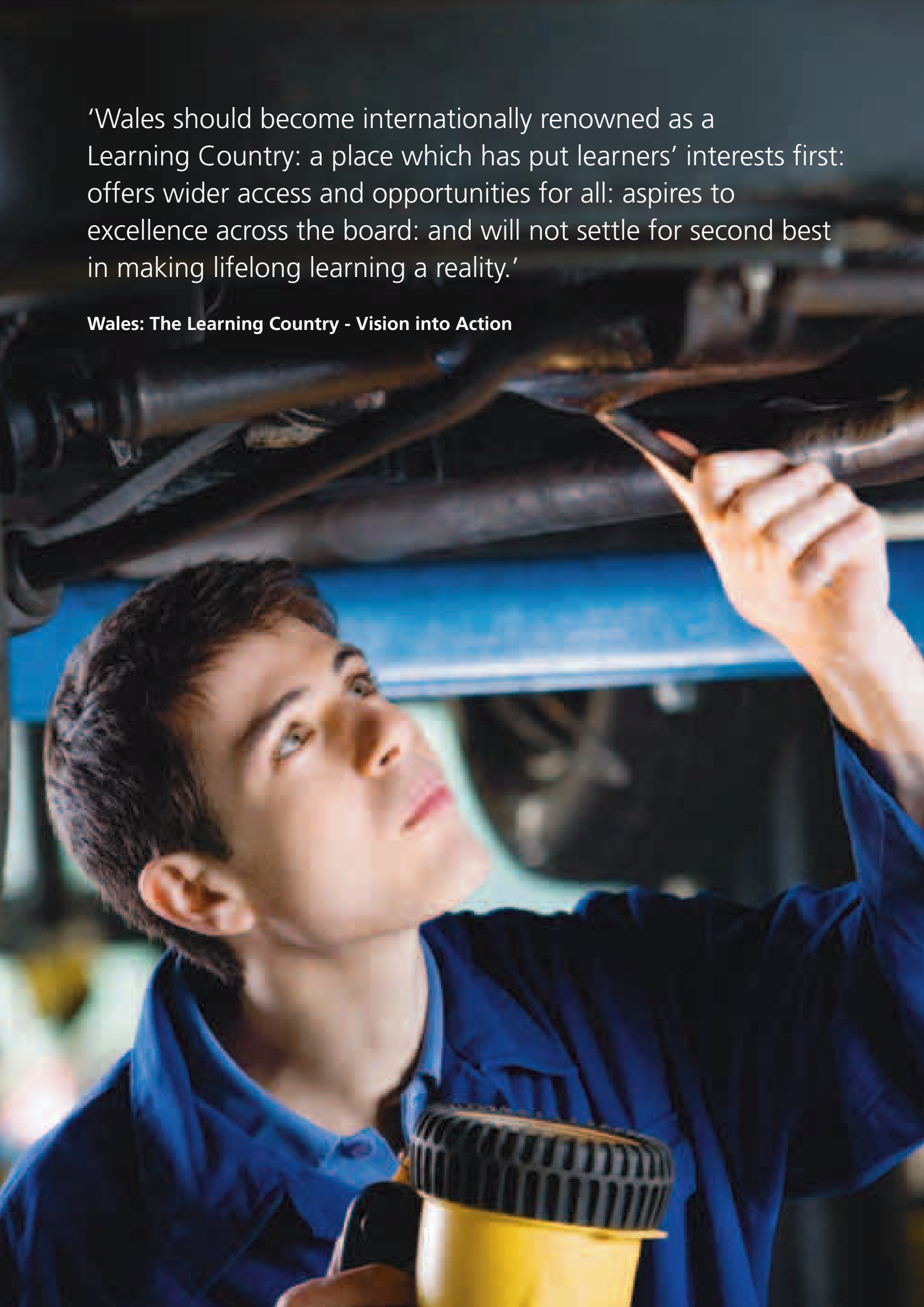
The stark reality is that unless we secure improvements at all levels of attainment, skills and employability, our people and our country will be left behind.

We know that we need to increase our maths and science capability and that we need to encourage greater mobility and flexibility within our workforce. These messages have been underlined by the findings of the Leitch Review: 'Prosperity for all in the global economy - world-class skills' ⁽¹⁾. He states:

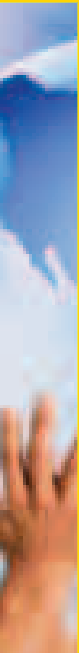
'Our nation's skills are not world class and we run the risk that this will undermine the UK's long term prosperity. Productivity continues to trail many of our main international comparators. Despite recent progress, the UK has serious social disparities with high levels of child poverty, poor employment rates for the disadvantaged, regional disparities and relatively high income inequality. Improving our skill levels can address all of these problems. It is clear...that despite substantial investment and reform plans already in place, by 2020 we will have managed only to run to stand still.'

'Wales should become internationally renowned as a Learning Country: a place which has put learners' interests first: offers wider access and opportunities for all: aspires to excellence across the board: and will not settle for second best in making lifelong learning a reality.'

Wales: The Learning Country - Vision into Action



Why the need for an International Education Strategic Framework? (cont'd...)



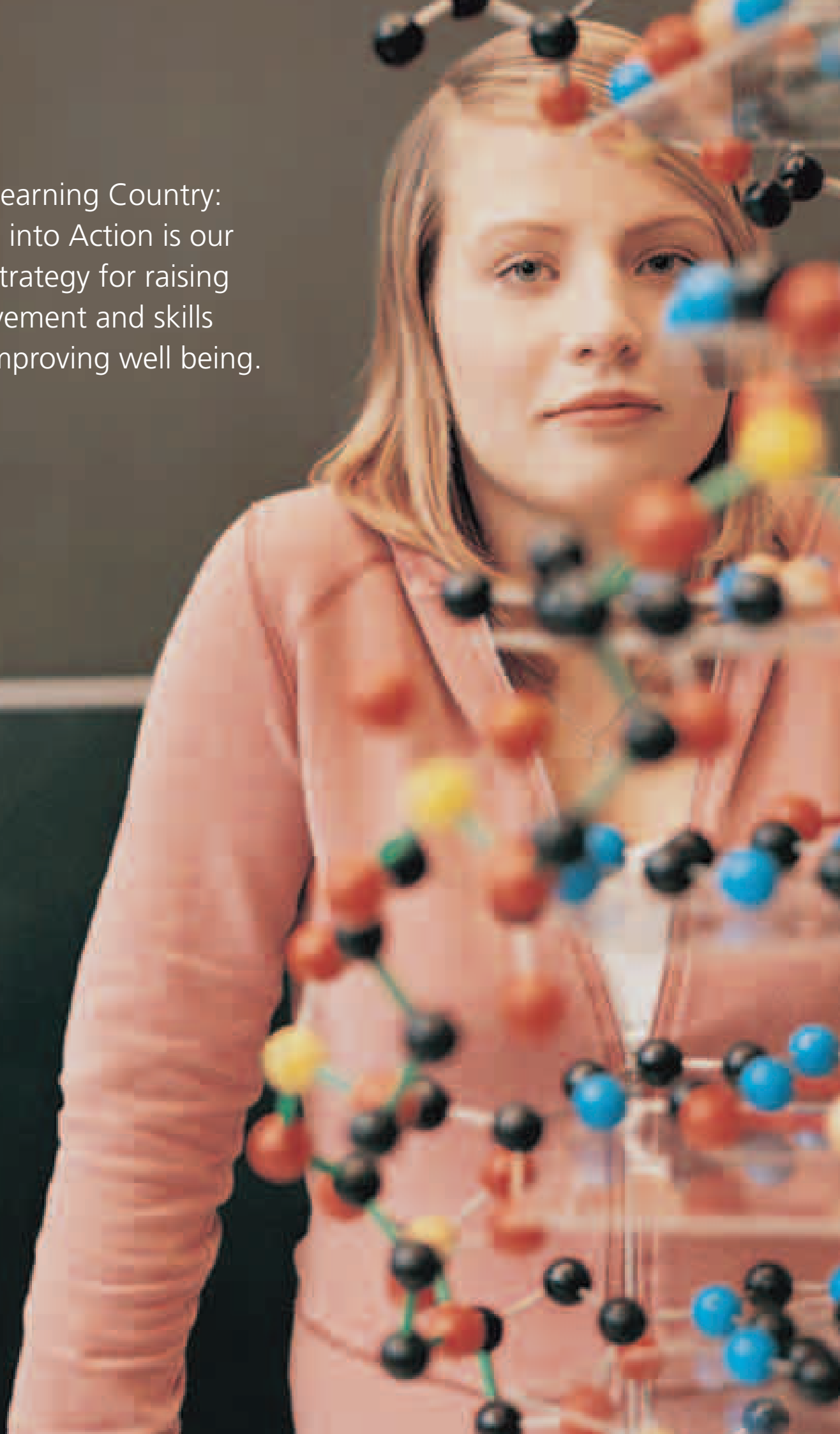
The latest Estyn inspection report reflects our increasing strengths, for example in learner attainment and school standards, but also cites gaps in achievement, absenteeism and exclusions levels, and in our ability to tackle the gender gap, improve collaboration and encourage broader Adult and Lifelong learning. The OECD (Programme for International Student Assessment) country educational rankings⁽²⁾ and the recent UNICEF report into children's well-being in the top 21 industrialised countries⁽³⁾, both demonstrate the need for Wales to make far more substantial progress if we are to meet our aspirations as a world nation.

We acknowledge the need to rise to these challenges with an educational approach which can dynamically raise educational and skills levels and also develop well rounded individuals, fully prepared for life and work in a globalised, interdependent world. These are the foundations which will fuel the productivity, innovation and competitiveness of our people and of our economy. These will lead to increased prosperity, greater social inclusion and social justice. We need this success for our people and for our country. We want Wales to take its

proper place as a small, smart, successful nation, influencing the 21st century world. This then is our core purpose and one that Wales can only achieve by all of us working together. If we succeed, Wales can secure these learning ambitions and truly be world class.

The Learning Country: Vision into Action is our core strategy for raising achievement and skills and improving well being. It presents a vision of Wales rivalling the best in the world by learning from the best and reciprocally sharing experience and expertise; it emphasises our commitment to the European Union's Lisbon agenda through modernisation of Europe's education and training system. It emphasises also Wales' continued participation in the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL) and our continued support for UNESCO. It emphasises a strengthening of our contribution to international debates on education reform, to building lessons learned from these exchanges into Assembly Government policies and strategies and to developing active and ongoing partnerships with other countries in doing so.

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The Government's One Wales agenda makes explicit our ambitions for 'Placing Wales in the World'. These commitments include: widening Wales' membership and effectiveness in relevant European and International bodies; continuing to raise the profile of Wales to make Wales a location of choice for people to live, work, study, visit or do business; continuing to make a contribution to the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals and to support the Wales in Africa programme. It involves developing a more strategic approach to putting Wales on the world's map; bringing greater coherence to the breadth of Assembly Government overseas activities and representation and of course, working with interests outside government to maximise the impact and benefit to Wales.

Similarly, the recently published Skills that Work for Wales strategy and action plan reflects renewed efforts to raise our game on skills. If we succeed we will unlock people's talents, regenerate our most deprived communities, help families and children escape from poverty, encourage business to group and the Welsh economy to prosper. The School Effectiveness Framework and Foundation Phase are building the basis for sustained learning and opportunities for children and young people of all backgrounds and starting points in life.



The International Education Strategic Framework is therefore designed to reinforce and progress the above aspirations and plans. It does so by proposing four strategic themes

- **Learning for a Global World: Improving Achievement, Skills and Wellbeing**
- **Enhancing Economic Prosperity and Social Cohesion**
- **Supporting Practitioners**
- **Driving the Change**

These themes are translated into concrete actions as reflected in the accompanying Action Plan. The Plan is not designed to be exhaustive but instead illustrates some of the key ways in which the Government will fulfil its aims. Its focus is very much centred on the educational and wellbeing of Welsh learners, however

it offers a broad, cross-cutting and collaborative approach to achieving this purpose.

I want to make absolutely clear that we have much to be proud of in Wales and to share with the world, for example, our Flying Start and Welsh Baccalaureate programmes, our success in Key Skills, the high quality of experience we offer to our FE and HE students and of course Wales is now recognised as a world leader in bilingual education. We have also pioneered the comprehensive Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales, which is providing an exemplar to other countries in Europe and assisting in the development of a European Qualifications Framework.



Similarly, we have been commended for our exemplary success with Careers Wales Online, an accessible, bilingual website designed to provide careers information and advice for individual learners of all ages and abilities. Just months after its launch, Careers Wales Online won a BAFTA award for Interactive Technical and Social Achievement. I am proud to acknowledge these impressive examples of Welsh innovation and excellence.

This International Education Strategic Framework aims to recognise such achievements and build upon these firm foundations. It reflects our belief that Wales can and must achieve far greater things for our people and far faster.

Devolution has provided us with the opportunity to create a distinctive and powerful education system - one capable of rising to the new global challenges and opportunities. Wales is indeed becoming a more dynamic, outward looking, knowledge-based society and economy. This Strategic Framework helps to progress and realise these aspirations even further.

Jane Hutt AM

Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills

World Class Wales - Transforming Learning for Success in a Globalised World

This strategy is founded on four strategic themes:

- Learning for a Global World: Improving Achievement, Skills and Wellbeing
- Enhancing Economic Prosperity and Social Cohesion
- Supporting Practitioners
- Driving the Change

Each strategic theme is set out below with a series of corresponding priority objectives.

1. Learning for a Global World: Improving Achievement, Skills and Wellbeing

All learners need to access learning and development which is relevant to future life and work in a modern world. Learners need an experience which utilises the range of opportunities and possibilities available to them. Examples of activity we will encourage include:

- Raising awareness and understanding of the challenges and opportunities created by a globalised world with learners, thereby increasing expectations and aspirations.

- Encouraging reforms to the school curriculum and broader FE and HE programmes, to enable more responsiveness to the international context, e.g. through World Languages, Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship and the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification.
- Encouraging schools, educational institutions and local education authorities to develop a greater external outlook and encourage mobility, e.g. through institutional linking, project collaborations, volunteering overseas, specifically through greater engagement with existing available programmes by, e.g. British Council, ECOTEC and Department for International Development programmes and the London Olympics 2012.
- Improving transparency and mutual recognition of qualifications across Europe and beyond via the Bologna Process and its Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area and through support for the development of the European Qualification Framework and the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training.



3. Supporting Practitioners

We will support our Practitioners to deliver relevant learning. To achieve this we will:

- strengthen the provision of appropriate information and guidance to help support the international dimensions of the revised school curriculum (e.g. relating to ESDGC, Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification, world languages, diversity and school linkages).
- ensure information and development opportunities to enable practitioners to be appropriately skilled and confident in responding to European and international dimensions of education within the school's curriculum.

4. Driving the Change

In order to ensure this strategy and its accompanying action plan is effectively implemented, DCELLS will:

- integrate intelligence on emerging international challenges and opportunities into policy development.
- ensure European and international information and research, benchmarking, good practice and lesson learning data is collated, considered and effectively disseminated to inform policy.
- position Welsh stakeholders to make the most of international and EU developments and support the Wales for Africa programme.
- integrate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into our policy and programmes.

Building on Strong Foundations: 2008 - 2012

1. Learning for a Global World: Improving Achievement, Skills and Wellbeing

Planned Actions:

1. That DCELLS continues to work closely with the British Council (BC) and ECOTEC to maximise the uptake and benefits in Wales of the Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo, Grundtvig and Transversal elements of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme and the EU Youth-in-Action programme including improving access to disadvantaged or under represented groups.

2. WAG continues to work through BC to promote international school links through the Global Gateway, Connecting Classrooms, Wales-China Curriculum Projects, UKIERI (UK India Education and Research Initiative), Dreams and Teams and DfID's Global School Partnerships, encouraging good practice to be identified and disseminated.

3. That the revised school curriculum, reflecting a greater international perspective, is effectively introduced by September 2008, accompanied by

appropriate guidance and resources for practitioners, especially in relation to subjects such as ESDGC.

4. That DCELLS in refreshing its modern foreign languages strategy promotes opportunities for the learning of languages in primary schools, improves take-up of language learning for 14-19 year olds and builds on the potential of bilingual speakers to acquire additional languages.

5. That DCELLS continues its development of Demonstrating Success, including Toolkits to support the development of social and emotional intelligence identifying learning and disseminating and utilising findings. The work being developed by UEF will inform these developments.

6. That DCELLS actively engages in International School Effectiveness dialogue with e.g. England, Ontario, Victoria, South Australia and other relevant countries.

7. That DCELLS participates fully in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009 organised by the OECD to enable comparison of our 15 year old students in relation to Maths, Reading and Sciences; ensuring results are disseminated and used to further improve policy and practice. In addition and subject to securing an adequate level of resources, that DCELLS considers the value and relevance of participating in other international comparative studies of pupils of a lower age, e.g. Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) organised by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) at the next available opportunity and of adult learners such as the Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIACC).

8. That DCELLS actively engages in the latest programme of European Structural Funds in support of our raising achievement, skills, economic and social cohesion agenda, specifically in relation to the Reach the Heights and Apprenticeship programmes, and takes full advantage of the European Social Fund provision for transnational projects.

9. That DCELLS continues to support UNESCO Cymru Wales so as to maximise the opportunities it presents in the fields of education, science and culture.

10. That DCELLS promotes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically by raising awareness amongst children and young people of the Convention and also by ensuring the Convention's Rights, are reinforced by the Assembly's 7 Core Aims for Children and Young People, are mainstreamed within all children and young people's policies and programmes and that progress is reported to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva.

11. That DCELLS continues to work towards achieving the objectives of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages, as agreed with the UK Government with regard to education in the Welsh language and responds to COMEX reports as appropriate. In particular, DCELLS aims to achieve the objective outlined in the Charter to increase provision in technical and vocational education and training through the medium of Welsh.

2. Enhancing Economic Prosperity and Social Cohesion

Planned Actions:

1. That DCELLS ensures through its response to Skills that Work for Wales, people in the Welsh labour market are equipped with the skills needed to respond to international economic competition.

2. That DCELLS in conjunction with appropriate stakeholders, develops and delivers a World Skills, World Olympics and Ryder Cup Programme for learners.

3. That DCELLS works towards Wales being a world leader in skills development, based on a demand led system, responding to global economic trends, specifically engaging employers in designs of skills and training development programmes.

4. That DCELLS commissions further international benchmarking on areas such as Provider Quality Assurance.

5. That DCELLS further encourages the mutual recognition of qualifications specifically through support for the EQF (European Qualifications Framework) and also the proposed ECVET (European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training).

6. That DCELLS continues to support the Bologna Agenda by promoting adequate incentives and capacity for Welsh HEIs to continue to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Erasmus Mundus for developing joint masters and doctoral programmes for students and staff and providing mobility for students and academics.

7. That DCELLS ensures current international promotion efforts act in the best interest of Wales, especially through proportionate participation in UK wide initiatives.



8. That DCELLS works closely with other WAG departments (e.g. European and External Affairs Division (EEAD), Department for the Economy and Transport (DET), International Business Wales (IBW) and relevant sector bodies to support the national promotion and marketing of Wales education, training and services overseas by:

- preparing a range of 'Education and Training in Wales' promotional materials including in overseas British embassies and British Council offices, specifically in priority countries.
- by liaising closely with DET and IBW to ensure relevant overseas educational delegates to UK are also invited to Wales to meet with Welsh education and training sector representatives and working with EEAD's VIP Visitor's Unit.

3. Supporting Practitioners

1. That DCELLS practitioner training and development programmes ensure practitioners are skilled and confident to respond to European and international dimensions of education across the curricula. (This includes ITT, Induction, CPD, leadership, coaching, mentoring, BC and VSO practitioner development programmes - such as the DCELLS funded Lecturers International Professional Development (LIPD) programme).

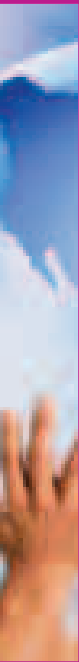
4. Driving the Change

1. That DCELLS ensures coherent delivery and review of the One Wales commitment to Wales in the World as part of its business planning and monitoring.

2. That DCELLS is alert to and acting on emerging international challenges and opportunities through horizon scanning and policy development including input from the Wales office in Brussels.

3. That DCELLS together with UNICEF and the Children's Commissioner, promotes the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, including support for the Rights Respecting Schools Award.

4. That DCELLS ensures appropriate European and international information and research, benchmarking, good practice and lesson learning, specifically regarding raising achievement, closing the gap, educational standards and skills, is collated, considered and effectively disseminated to stakeholders across Wales to support policy development and improvement in delivery.



5. That DCELLS maximises opportunities for learners, practitioners, community groups and institutions to access opportunities in support of international development, by providing information on available funding such as DfID's Enabling Effective Support Programme (for which DCELLS provides match funding) and by encouraging volunteering overseas, e.g. through initiatives such as the Assembly Government's Wales for Africa programme and Dolen Cymru and British Council's Lesotho Teacher Placement Programme.

6. That DCELLS in accordance with our 'One Wales' commitment to enhance Wales' role in key European organisations and networks, continues to play a leading role in the development of the European Association of Regional and Local Authorities for Lifelong Learning (EARLALL) as an influential player within the European Union, by taking forward, in concert with other regions, the policy areas identified for action by regional governments at the EARLALL conference in Livorno in June 2007, with particular regard to enhancing mobility opportunities for Welsh vocational education and training learners.

DCELLS will also build contacts and exchange best practice with our EARLALL partners. In this way we aim both to consolidate and strengthen EARLALL as an Association that the institutions of the European Union look to for advice and to transform our inter-governmental relationships with partner regions into beneficial links between learners and practitioners across Europe.

7. That as part of core business DCELLS continues to work in collaboration with other UK nations to identify shared areas of European and international interest that can benefit from joint responses.

That DCELLS collaborates with others in efforts to keep up to date with international networks and developments especially in EU and OECD countries and is alert to opportunities for exchange on educational policy with other countries (given the current programme on tri-level educational reform to enhance learning and improve educational policy and practice).



Further information

For further information please contact Jayne Nettleton at the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills on **029 2080 1412** or e-mail **international.education@wales.gsi.gov.uk**

Notes:

1. The Leitch Report (Prosperity for all in the Global economy - world-class skills) was commissioned by HM Treasury and published in December 2006.
2. The PISA 2006 (Programme for International Student Assessment) study compared 400,000 students across 57 countries. It demonstrated Wales was below average in terms of maths, reading and science against our English, Scottish and Northern Irish counterparts and below our OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) counterparts in relation to reading and maths.
3. Report Card 7: An Overview of Child Wellbeing in Rich Countries, UNICEF 2007.