



Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru The National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant a Phobl Ifanc The Children and Young People Committee

**Dydd Iau, 17 Tachwedd 2011
Thursday, 17 November 2011**

Cynnwys Contents

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon
Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

Gweithredu Mesur Dysgu a Sgiliau (Cymru) 2009: Sesiwn Dystiolaeth Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session

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Cofnodir y trafodion hyn yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynndi yn y pwyllgor. Yn ogystal, cynhwysir cyfieithiad Saesneg o gyfraniadau yn y Gymraeg.

These proceedings are reported in the language in which they were spoken in the committee.
In addition, an English translation of Welsh speeches is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol Committee members in attendance

Angela Burns	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Christine Chapman	Llafur (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Labour (Committee Chair)

Keith Davies	Llafur Labour
Suzy Davies	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
Lynne Neagle	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Aled Roberts	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Simon Thomas	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Ian Bosworth	Darlithydd Addysg Bellach a Chadeirydd Cangen Undeb Prifysgolion a Cholegau Cymru Coleg Morgannwg Further Education Lecturer and Chair of the University and College Union Wales Branch in Coleg Morgannwg
Simon Bracken	Pennaeth Cyfadran, Technolegau Creadigol a Digidol, Coleg Caerdydd a'r Fro Head of Faculty, Creative and Digital Technologies, Cardiff and Vale College
Dr Philip Dixon	Cyfarwyddwr, Cymdeithas Athrawon a Darlithwyr Cymru Director, Association of Teachers and Lecturers Wales
Rex Phillips	Trefnydd Cymru, Cymdeithas Genedlaethol yr Ysgolfeistri ac Undeb yr Athrawesau Wales Organiser, National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers
Lleu Williams	Swyddog Cyswllt Gwleidyddol, Undeb Prifysgolion a Cholegau Cymru Political Liaison Officer, University and College Union Wales
Rebecca Williams	Swyddog Polisi, Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru Policy Officer, UCAC

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Claire Morris	Clerc Clerk
Claire Griffiths	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Anne Thomas	Gwasanaeth Ymchwil Research Service

Dechreuodd y cyfarfod am 9.16 a.m.
The meeting began at 9.16 a.m.

Cyflwyniad, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon Introduction, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Christine Chapman:** Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the Children and Young People Committee. I remind you to switch off any mobile phones, BlackBerrys and pagers. We have had apologies from Jocelyn Davies.

Gweithredu Mesur Dysgu a Sgiliau (Cymru) 2009: Sesiwn Dystiolaeth Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session

[2] **Christine Chapman:** We will take evidence today from ATL Cymru, UCAC and NASUWT. I welcome all of you here this morning. Will you introduce yourselves for the record?

[3] **Dr Dixon:** I am Philip Dixon, director of the Association for Teachers and Lecturers in Wales.

[4] **Mr Bracken:** I am Simon Bracken, and I am currently head of faculty at Cardiff and Vale College with responsibility for school partnership work.

[5] **Ms Williams:** Fy enw i yw Rebecca **Ms Williams:** My name is Rebecca Williams, ac yr wyf yn swyddog polisi i Williams, and I am policy officer for UCAC. Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru.

[6] **Mr Phillips:** I am Rex Phillips, Wales organiser for the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers.

[7] **Christine Chapman:** Many thanks for your papers, which Members will have read. There are a number of questions on this and I will invite Members to ask them. I will start with a general question. We know that the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 is not due to be implemented until September 2012. In practice, has the Measure been implemented across Wales already? Philip, would you like to start?

[8] **Dr Dixon:** The feedback that we are getting from our members is that a lot of progress has been made so far. There is probably some way to go in certain areas—as ever, progress is patchy. However, in terms of the offer that is being made to our young people, most areas now offer the 30 options. The feedback that we have received, which is reflected in the paper, is that there has been an upsurge in the number of vocational qualifications on offer, which is obviously something that we welcome.

[9] **Christine Chapman:** How has it affected teachers and lecturers on the ground?

[10] **Mr Phillips:** From our perspective, one of the effects has been quite negative in terms of the organisation at school level. As we state in our paper, we believe that, in some instances, redundancies have been declared and contracts have been fractionalised in order to accommodate the additional choices. Also, although the choices are there, we are not convinced that everyone has the opportunity to take up those courses because of issues of viability and numbers.

[11] **Mr Bracken:** It is also fair to say that schools and colleges worked in partnership for a number of years before the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009 was even considered as a piece of legislation. It has crystallised some of the issues and some of the discussions that have been going on for 10 to 12 years.

[12] **Christine Chapman:** What about geographical variation across Wales? Is it consistent or not consistent?

[13] **Mr Phillips:** Are you talking about the choices that are on offer?

[14] **Christine Chapman:** I am talking about the general implementation of the Measure.

[15] **Ms Williams:** Ynghylch sut mae wedi effeithio ar wahanol rannau o Gymru, mae pob rhan o Gymru wedi llwyddo, fwy neu lai, i gyrraedd y nifer gofynnol o gyrsiau o dan y Mesur—30 cwrs—â phump o'r rheini yn gyrsiau galwedigaethol. Mae cysondeb dros Gymru o ran hynny, ond mae sut mae ysgolion a cholegau wedi llwyddo i gyrraedd y pwynt hwnnw yn amrywio o ardal i ardal. Mae'r heriau a'r anawsterau wedi bod yn wahanol, yn dibynnu os yw'n ardal ddinesig neu'n ardal wledig, ac os yw'n ddarpariaeth gyfrwng Cymraeg, gyfrwng Saesneg neu gyfrwng dwyieithog. Fodd bynnag, mae'r pictiwr o ran llwyddiant cyrraedd y ffigur yn eithriadol ac yn gyson iawn dros Gymru.

Ms Williams: With regard to how it has affected different parts of Wales, every part of Wales has succeeded, more or less, in reaching the required number of courses under the Measure—30 courses—five of which are vocational courses. There is consistency across Wales in that regard, but the way in which schools and colleges have reached that point varies from area to area. The challenges and the problems have been different, depending on whether it is an urban or rural area, and whether it is Welsh-medium, English-medium or bilingual provision. However, the picture in terms of success in reaching the figure is exceptional and is very consistent across Wales.

[16] **Christine Chapman:** How positive are you, then? There are issues, clearly, which we want to explore today, but would you say that we are generally moving in the right direction? What would be your view on that, bearing in mind that there are probably things that you would like to address?

[17] **Dr Dixon:** We welcome the progress so far, and the key thing that we must always remember—again, I think that we stated this in the paper—is that qualifications, and education in general, are always for the learner. The fact that there are more options available now, and that there is an increase in vocational options, in particular, is something that we have welcomed. We have been looking for that for quite a number of years. So, it has been positive in that sense. There are still wrinkles that need to be ironed out, but the general direction of travel has been pretty good.

[18] **Ms Williams:** Byddwn yn cytuno â hynny. Yr ydym yn cytuno'n llwyr gydag egwyddorion y Mesur a chydag ehangu'r dewisiadau sydd ar gael i bobl ifanc, yn enwedig y dewisiadau galwedigaethol. Mae hynny wedi bod yn bwysig iawn ac yn llwyddiannus iawn. Nid yw wedi digwydd yn rhwydd—bu'n her anferthol—ond mae pryderon am y dyfodol, yn enwedig yn sgîl toriadau ariannol, gan fod llawer o hyn wedi bod yn bosibl oherwydd bod grantiau penodol wedi ei wneud yn bosibl. Gyda thoriadau o 12 y cant y flwyddyn nesaf a 7 y cant y flwyddyn wedyn, bydd llawer o elfennau yn anodd iawn i'w cyflawni yn y blynyddoedd nesaf.

Ms Williams: I would agree with that. We entirely agree with the principles of the Measure and with widening the options available for young people, especially the vocational options. That has been very important and very successful. It has not happened easily—it has been an enormous challenge—but there are concerns about the future, especially in light of the financial cuts, as much of this has been possible because specific grants have made it possible. With cuts of 12 per cent next year and 7 per cent the year after, many elements will be very difficult to deliver in the next few years.

[19] **Christine Chapman:** I will move us on now, as Angela Burns wants to ask a question on funding, and then other Members will come in.

[20] **Angela Burns:** I am glad that you have brought up that topic, because it is an area that is of great interest to me. How do you perceive that we will be able to maintain the 14-19 learning pathways agenda given that the real-terms cut is some £4.2 million, and it is to be funded by savings of almost £3.4 million? You cannot get a quart out of a pint pot. Have you had any discussions about how this might be taken forward or how the Welsh Government is looking to achieve this?

[21] **Mr Bracken:** There has been a lot of discussion about that within the local education authority where we work, in Cardiff and the Vale. Over the last two or three years, schools have tried to optimise the offer, so it has not been a case of maximising the offer by offering a huge amount of courses—it has been a case of trying to optimise in order to meet the requirements of the Measure and the needs of the pupils. As to whether schools will be able to do that in the future, I doubt that they will even be able to continue to offer the optimal courses that they would wish to offer without making cuts elsewhere within the curriculum.

[22] **Ms Williams:** Y darn anoddaf i'w wneud gyda llai o arian yw cydweithio, a dim ond drwy gydweithio mae'n bosibl darparu 30 o gyrsgiau. Y prif gost yw'r teithio, a dyna fydd yn fwyaf heriol gyda llai o arian. Y syniad ar y dechrau oedd y byddai'r Mesur yn gost-effeithiol, hynny yw, y byddai cydweithio yn arbed arian i sefydliadau. Cododd bob un o'r undebau amheuan am hynny ar y dechrau, ac mae hynny'n parhau i fod yn wir, yn yr ystyr ei fod wedi bod yn bosibl ond ar sail grantiau penodol. Felly, gyda llai o arian, teithio fydd y peth cyntaf fydd yn dioddef a bydd cydweithio rhwng sefydliadau yn anoddach. Y prif beth y gallai rhywun ei wneud i achub y sefyllfa fyddai ystyried lleihau'r nifer gofynnol o gyrsgiau. Byddai modd lleihau'r nifer gofynnol heb niweidio'r dewisiadau sydd ar gael i bobl ifanc yn ormodol—byddai modd ei wneud gyda llai o arian wedyn.

Ms Williams: The most difficult bit to do with less money is collaboration, and it is only through collaboration that it is possible to provide 30 courses. The main cost is travel, and that will be the biggest challenge with less money. The idea at the outset was that the Measure would be cost-effective, that is, that collaboration would mean savings for institutions. All of the unions raised doubts about that at the outset, and that continues to be true, in that it has been possible only due to specific grants. So, with less money, travel will be the first thing to suffer and collaboration between institutions will be more difficult. The main thing that could be done to save the situation is to consider decreasing the mandatory number of courses. It would be possible to decrease the mandatory number without unduly affecting the choices available to young people—it could then be done with less money.

[23] **Angela Burns:** I would like to pick up on that point about choice, but I know that another Member will ask about it. It would be interesting to understand how we can decrease the number of courses but still keep the same choice. When we look at the costs of implementing the 14-19 pathways, people always talk about transport as a huge part of that, but what are your views on the impact that this has on teachers, particularly part-time teachers who deliver those courses, and their work schedule, and the pressures that they might come under to change their working patterns in order to maximise the cost effectiveness of students going from A to B to C?

[24] **Mr Phillips:** That was a specific issue for us last year, because we faced redundancy situations in three schools and, in part, that was attributed to the learning pathways and also, in part, to the Welsh baccalaureate. Schools were suggesting that they did not need staff on a full-time basis, and a major concern for us is that this is leading to the fractionalisation of contracts. We seem to be moving in schools to a system that mirrors the employment practice in the further education sector, which is more fractionalised than school-based employment.

That is a big issue for us. We do not believe that that needs to happen and we rejected the approaches that were being taken in the schools, which is why we took industrial action in those schools and, in part, we were able to resolve that. However, it is a big issue for our members, that an initiative that clearly is of benefit to the pupils should impact upon them and their livelihoods.

[25] **Aled Roberts:** Yr wyf eisiau mynd yn ôl at y grant teithio. A yw'r awdurdodau addysg lleol yn ymwybodol o faint o grant y maent yn ei golli ym mhob ardal?

Aled Roberts: I want to return to the travel grant. Are the local education authorities aware of how much grant they are losing in each area?

[26] **Ms Williams:** Yr wyf yn credu bod yr ysgolion yn ymwybodol ac yr wyf yn cymryd bod yr awdurdodau hefyd, ond mae'r newyddion wedi cyrraedd yn ddiweddar ac mae'r toriad o 12 y cant yn digwydd o fis Ebrill, felly ychydig o amser sydd mewn gwirionedd i newid trefniadau ac i ailgynllunio.

Ms Williams: I think that the schools are aware and I assume that the authorities are also aware, but the news arrived only recently and the 12 per cent cut will be implemented from April, so there is not much time in reality to change arrangements and to remap services.

[27] **Aled Roberts:** A fydd y cwtogi o fewn y flwyddyn pan fydd y trefniadau teithio dal yn weithredol?

Aled Roberts: Will that cut be in-year when the travel arrangements are still in operation?

[28] **Ms Williams:** Bydd.

Ms Williams: Yes.

[29] **Mr Phillips:** What you are saying is correct. There are issues surrounding the travel arrangements in addition to the funding, simply because of the distance that pupils must travel in order to take their courses, especially in rural areas. So, there are pressures all round on the pathways, but the concept is sound. As has been said before, it is in the practicalities and the delivery that the difficulties arise.

[30] **Christine Chapman:** I will bring Philip in, and then Jenny and Keith.

[31] **Dr Dixon:** On that, one of our members said, rather scurrilously, that he wished that he had invested in a taxi firm in his area before all this took off, because he would have made a fair amount of money out of it. More seriously, it is a real problem in rural areas, where public transport can be a real problem, and we have highlighted that in the paper, with specific instances. Those costs are set to increase and I think that they have been projected with varying degrees of accuracy by the local authorities. Some have got it spot on, but others are some way off the mark.

[32] **Jenny Rathbone:** Given that you are being asked to work in a collaborative arrangement with other institutions, I wanted to pick up on Rex's concerns about people being made redundant in one institution, presumably because the course that they used to deliver is now being delivered in another institution. What is the possibility of staff simply delivering their course in a different institution, while being paid for by their original one?

[33] **Mr Phillips:** That creates a great deal of difficulties in terms of who the employer is, which can happen—

[34] **Jenny Rathbone:** Why is it difficult?

[35] **Mr Phillips:** Simply because it would be a transfer of their employment. It depends on who will pay them. What I think that you are suggesting is that they could deliver the

course in a different institution—

[36] **Jenny Rathbone:** Yes, that is indeed what I am suggesting, simply because, as long as they are being paid and learners are being given choices, the course has to go where the majority of learners wish to do it, presumably. That is one of the founding principles of this.

[37] **Mr Phillips:** I understand that, but the fact of the matter is that, generally speaking, the place where the course is being delivered will also have its own staff. A school may have its own staff. The only way that you could look at a transfer would be if there was a vacancy in the college to deliver that course. That is where the problem comes in. The general problem from the school's perspective is that this is leading to a fractionalisation of the employment status of teachers. I do not think that that is for the good of pupils.

9.30 a.m.

[38] **Dr Dixon:** Rex highlighted the problems relating to this issue. However, there is some light at the end of the tunnel, in the sense that the unions have been pressing for a long time to have a national contract for FE staff. We have begun negotiations with Colegau Cymru and although they have been rather protracted, we are making progress. It would be good if the Government were to be pressured into putting pressure on participants so that that could be sorted. When dealing with various institutions under various contracts, things become much more problematic. If there was a national contract for FE staff, you would have two sets of national negotiations going on. Therefore, I would urge the committee to press for a satisfactory resolution because that would help in this matter.

[39] **Ms Williams:** Collaboration either involves students moving from institution to institution or staff moving from institution to institution. Both scenarios happen, and there are relative advantages and disadvantages in both cases. In terms of staff travelling, which I believe was the point made, we are seeing problems with staff not being given adequate time to make those journeys. They are being expected to travel in their lunch hour and they do not have time to park, meaning that they are running into the institution and arriving in a sweat and under pressure. Those kinds of problems exist, as well as the contractual problems that arise.

[40] In terms of students travelling, there is a particular problem with those in the 14-16 cohort, who are increasingly going into further education colleges. That is a problem because there are child protection issues in that context, given that further education colleges are not really set up to deal with students in that cohort. There is also a problem with FE staff training. In general, these staff members have not been trained to deal with 14 to 16-year-olds. There are discipline issues, and dealing with pupils in this cohort is a very different kettle of fish to dealing with students who are 16 and older. So, whichever set of people are travelling around, there are benefits and challenges.

[41] **Keith Davies:** O'r hyn yr ydych wedi ei ddweud, mae cludiant yn mynd i fod yn broblem aruthrol. Rebecca, yr ydych wedi sôn am y ffaith bod staff yn teithio, a dyna'r ateb siŵr o fod. Ni allwch symud 30 o blant yn gyson oherwydd problemau'n ymwneud ag amserlennu yn y colegau a'r ysgolion, er enghraifft. Onid cael system lle mae'r staff yn teithio, yn hytrach na'r plant, yw'r ateb? Yn ôl y dystiolaeth yr ydych chi wedi ei rhoi, ni fydd hwn yn gweithio yn y tymor hir oherwydd costau cludiant. Onid cael system **Keith Davies:** From what you have said, transport is going to be a major problem. Rebecca, you have mentioned the fact that staff travel, and that is probably the solution. You cannot regularly move 30 children because of problems with timetabling at the colleges and schools, for example. The solution is to have the staff travelling rather than the pupils, is it not? According to the evidence that you have given, this will not work in the long term because of transportation costs. The solution is to have

Ile mae'r staff yn symud yw'r ateb? Yr ydym yn trafod system ranbarthol yn hytrach na rhwydwaith lleol yn unig. Onid yr ateb yn y tymor hir yw cael system lle mae'r staff yn teithio?

the staff move, is it not? We are talking about a regional system, not just a local network. Therefore, the long-term solution is to have the staff travelling rather than the pupils, is it not?

[42] **Christine Chapman:** I will bring Philip in on that one, and I think that Simon wants to come in afterwards.

[43] **Dr Dixon:** Very briefly, I think that it depends on the course. Certain courses are equipment intensive. Hairdressing and other courses, for example, need equipment in situ and the pupils need to be transported for those classes because you cannot bring the equipment to the schools. Simon is much better informed than I am.

[44] **Mr Bracken:** I will follow on from Philip, who has made my point perfectly. I will provide an example. Auto courses are very popular with 14 to 16-year-olds. There are two centres set up in Cardiff for automotive courses, both on the east side: one on Trowbridge Road and the other around the corner on Heron Road. Pupils from across Cardiff need to move to those two centres in order to be able to access auto courses. If you are on the east side of Cardiff, it is relatively easy; if you are in the west or north of Cardiff, it is not. Pupils at Radyr, for example, have a 45-minute journey to get to those facilities. The facilities, the staff and the pupils are your triangle, and that is the problem.

[45] **Mr Phillips:** I think that you also have to increase your staffing levels to accommodate staff travel. This could also place great constraints on the way in which schools timetable their lessons. In terms of accommodating teachers who go out to teach 14 to 19-year-old pupils, we have to remember that, at secondary schools, teachers do not only teach that cohort; they teach pupils from 11 up to 19 years of age in some schools, where there are sixth forms. There are difficulties in terms of staff movement as well. There would also have to be quite intense negotiations with the trade unions on the arrangements that would be put in place for that travel. There are some issues being raised about the use of staff cars and the insurance that staff are expected to take out if they use their cars for work. It is not as straightforward as saying, 'Staff would have to travel'.

[46] **Christine Chapman:** I am going to move on now as we have other areas we need to cover. Keith, did you want to come in on some of the issues?

[47] **Keith Davies:** Yr unig beth arall yr hoffwn ei drafod yw'r mater o symud plant i wahanol adeiladau. Fel ATL Cymru, yr ydych yn feirniadol yn eich tystiolaeth o gyrsiau galwedigaethol, yn enwedig cyrsiau galwedigaethol yng nghyfnod allweddol 4. Yr ydych yn dweud yn eich papur ein bod yn cynnig gormod o gyrsiau yn y pen draw. Efallai na fyddai'r broblem o ran symud plant o un ganolfan i'r llall yn bodoli pe baech yn cael gwared â rhai o'r cyrsiau galwedigaethol yr ydych yn honni sy'n werth dim.

Keith Davies: The only other thing that I would like to return to is the issue of moving children between different buildings. As ATL Cymru, you have been critical in your evidence of vocational courses, especially those in key stage 4. In your paper you say that we are ultimately offering too many courses. The problem of transporting children from one centre to another would not arise, perhaps, if you got rid of some of the vocational courses that you claim are worthless.

[48] **Dr Dixon:** I do not think that, as a union, we would want to say that. I am sorry; if the paper gives that impression, it is a mistake on our part. We have welcomed the increase in the courses on offer and we have always campaigned for that. We have a great record on campaigning for parity of esteem and so on. What we are trying to say in the paper is that sometimes, because of other forces at work, children have been pushed into qualifications that

do not necessarily suit the pathway that they might want to follow. Part of the problem has been that we have tended to look at this whole issue too atomistically. What we need to be thinking of is the pathway that youngsters follow, what qualifications they need and where they should do them to get to where they want to be. We have tended to say, 'If we run those qualifications, the youngsters could do those qualifications and then the scores on the doors in schools will go up.' That is the problem that we are trying to refer to.

[49] **Keith Davies:** Mae'n rhaid i mi ddod yn ôl ar hwn. Mae gennych ddwy enghraifft yn eich tystiolaeth. Mae un enghraifft yn sôn am gymhwyster galwedigaethol cenedlaethol a bod cymhwyster o'r fath yn gyfwerth â dau TGAU er bod modd ei gwblhau yn yr un amser â TGAU cyffredin. Yr ydych yn beirniadu hynny. Mae gennych enghraifft arall o rywun yn dilyn cwrs gwyddoniaeth ac yn gwneud BTEC lefel 2 yng nghyfnod allweddol 4, ond nid yw hwnnw'n gwrs addas i fynd ymlaen i'r chweched dosbarth neu'r coleg i gwblhau gwyddoniaeth lefel 3. Felly, mae'n rhaid i mi ddweud wrthy eich bod yn feirniadol iawn yn eich papur. Os ail-ddarllenwch eich papur, fe welwch eich bod yn feirniadol o'r cyrsiau galwedigaethol. O'r hyn a ddarllenais i, yr unig reswm mae ysgolion yn eu cynnig yw bod yn rhaid i 20 y cant o'r 30 o gyrsiau a gynigir fod yn rhai galwedigaethol. Yn ôl eich papur, nid yw hynny'n beth da.

Keith Davies: I have to come back on that. You have two examples in your evidence. One example mentions an NVQ and that the NVQ is equivalent to two GCSEs, although it can be completed in the same amount of time as a normal GCSE. You criticise that. You have another example of someone following a science course and doing a BTEC level 2 in key stage 4, but that is not an appropriate course to go on to the sixth form or college to complete science level 3. So, I must tell you that you are very critical in your paper. If you re-read your paper, you will see that you are critical of the vocational courses. From what I read, the only reason that schools offer these courses is that 20 per cent of the 30 courses on offer have to be vocational. According to your paper, that is not a good thing.

[50] **Dr Dixon:** What we were trying to say in the paper is that the equivalence is distorting. There is a temptation to put children in to do what are perceived to be easier subjects or which get the same results, because of the pressure on schools to improve their results. The banding system is going to increase that pressure. I am trying to say that if you break that equivalence, then you will not get those distortions. The main point that I want to make, and as we say in the paper, is that qualifications are for the learner and that should determine what the learner chooses, not the needs of the institution, as happens on occasion.

[51] **Mr Phillips:** Everybody wants parity of esteem between vocational and GCSE courses, but there is a debate to be had about where that parity exists and how it is put in place. We have had similar views expressed to us by our members. These are views about how it is easier to obtain a grade that is equivalent to an A to C if you opt for a particular type or style of course. I think that is probably the point that the ATL is making. However, as unions, we all want vocational courses for youngsters and we all agree that there should be parity of esteem, but it is where you draw that parity that is the issue.

[52] **Mr Bracken:** It is a small point, but we still have two clear routes for young people. They either end up opting for an academic progression route or a vocational route. There is not any swap-over. Once you go down one route, you tend to stay there. Going back to the point about the BTEC science level 2, those pupils tend to progress to vocational courses at level 3 rather than A-levels. What the learning and skills Measure has not done is bring vocational and academic subjects alongside each other. You still, essentially, get students doing one or the other.

[53] **Julie Morgan:** To follow up on that, is there any hope of avoiding those two

completely separate pathways?

[54] **Mr Bracken:** All the daily discussions in the media about academic and vocational qualifications are trying to compare apples and pears. While that debate goes on, we are never going to get people to understand that they are different animals. Certainly, the learning and skills Measure has not allowed pupils to study a broad mix of vocational and academic subjects—for example, pupils usually choose just one vocational course alongside eight or nine academic subjects pre 16. That does not give you parity, because it says ‘You can do one vocational subject, but most of what you do should be on the academic side’. It has opened up the debate, but I do not think that it is bringing the two areas together.

[55] **Julie Morgan:** Your evidence has been fairly forthright, Rex. I know that, in your evidence to the Stage 1 committee, you said that local education authorities and schools would end up as bystanders, and that the further education colleges would be totally in control. How do you think that that has progressed? You have said a bit already, but perhaps you could expand on it.

[56] **Mr Phillips:** There is evidence to suggest that we are seeing that shift in who is actually controlling post-16 and post-14 education. Again, it is happening on the basis of areas. We have made this point before—if you look at the map of Wales now, and the opportunities that pupils have in terms of the choice of setting where they can study post 14 and post 16, you will find that, eventually, Blaenau Gwent will only have a college-based education for pupils post 16, and the same will be happening in Merthyr. It has already happened in Neath Port Talbot, and has been the case for some considerable time. Powys has just announced its proposals, and there will be some school-based post-16 education remaining there, but it is still early days on that in terms of transformation. These two things are inextricably linked, and some of our concerns are being realised—we see that some authorities appear to be more than eager to abnegate their responsibility for post-16 education and pass that over to the FE sector. It will happen on a patchwork basis, and you could end up with a postcode lottery, so your options will depend on where you are, and what type of setting you can study in post 16.

[57] **Julie Morgan:** As for the pupils, does it matter in what setting they learn?

[58] **Mr Phillips:** In many respects, you would need to ask the pupils that. From our perspective, yes, it does matter for some pupils. For some, the college would be exactly the right setting for them to continue their studies, and that would be where they needed to be. However, the school-based sixth-form setting would be better for others.

[59] **Christine Chapman:** I will bring in Philip and then Jenny, and then I want to move on to Welsh-medium provision.

[60] **Dr Dixon:** Obviously, as the Association of Teachers and Lecturers, we are resolutely neutral in determining between schools and colleges, because we represent members in both. However, although we have had certain local solutions in Wales, as Rex highlighted, such as Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil and so on, many of which have been very successful, I cannot see that we have ever had a debate at a national level about what you might want to label the tertiarisation of education, and where it could best be delivered. That is the sort of debate that we possibly need to have. I think that a lot of the agenda is still driven by the colleges, and I was slightly disturbed to find out that ColegauCymru has already been involved in discussions, as I understand it, with the department about the new national planning and funding system. I do not think that we have had any contact about that yet on the school side. That sort of discussion needs to take place.

9.45 a.m.

[61] On the question of whether it matters or not, I would not want to see—I think that this is what Rex alluded to—the choice between going to a sixth form or a college only available in the leafy suburbs, and everyone else having no choice at all. That is something that we would not want to see develop in Wales—that the only people who have the choice are those who are already privileged.

[62] **Julie Morgan:** Has that trend been happening?

[63] **Mr Phillips:** Yes, because of the way in which post-16 education is being organised and transformation.

[64] **Jenny Rathbone:** That is an important issue, and we need to map where the provision is. Coming back to the business of informed choice, the specific issue that you mentioned—it is in Philip's document, I think—is that a BTEC in science does not translate into somebody being able to do A-level science. Why?

[65] **Mr Bracken:** I am not a science specialist, but the answer to that probably lies in the skills and the knowledge that is imparted on a vocational course as opposed to an academic course. Academic courses tend to be focused on having a lot of knowledge and content whereas vocational courses tend to be more exploratory and develop research skills, albeit at level 2. The feeling from A-level science teachers in schools is that pupils who have studied a vocational level 2 science course may have very good laboratory skills, but may not have all of the background knowledge that they would have gained from studying double or triple award science. That would enable them to have the skills for level 3, A-level science.

[66] **Jenny Rathbone:** Clearly, there needs to be much more robust discussion on this, with scientists in our universities in particular. We must bear in mind what James Dyson has said, which is that we need many more engineers or we are never going to redirect our economy away from the financial sector.

[67] **Mr Bracken:** There are many other level 3 or level 4 courses that vocational science students could study. There are modern and advanced apprenticeships that move them on to level 3 and 4 to connect with industry. It is a misnomer for science students to think that A-levels are the only route to a science-based university course. The discussion needs to be much broader on which qualifications the vocational courses lead on to.

[68] **Jenny Rathbone:** We need to have that discussion elsewhere. Rebecca, you said that one of the ways in which we could cope with reduced funding would be to decrease the amount of choice. At the moment, providers are obliged to offer 30 courses, including five vocational courses. Could you go a little further in saying how we could decrease the obligation without radically decreasing the choice to individual pupils?

[69] **Ms Williams:** Ar hyn o bryd, mae'r ffigur o 30 o gyrsiau, gyda phump galwedigaethol, wedi'i gynnwys yn rheoliadau'r Mesur. Felly, byddai'n fater cymharol syml i newid y rheoliadau heb newid y Mesur ei hun. Bydd angen bod yn ofalus o ran diogelu isafswm o gyrsiau galwedigaethol, am mai dyna un o brif rinweddau'r Mesur, ac un o'r meysydd y mae wedi llwyddo orau ynddynt. Nid oedd rheswm penodol, hyd y gwelaf i, dros bennu'r ffigur 30 yn y lle cyntaf. Ni fyddai **Ms Williams:** At present, the figure of 30 courses, with five vocational, is included in the regulations, so it would be relatively simple to change the regulations without changing the Measure itself. We would need to be careful in terms of safeguarding a minimum number of vocational courses, because that was one of its main merits and one of its greatest achievements. There was no specific reason, as far as I can see, for choosing that initial figure of 30. Reducing it to just as arbitrary a figure of 25 would not

lleihau y ffigur i un yr un mor fypwyol o 25 o reidrwydd yn lleihau cymaint â hynny ar yr ehangder dewis a fyddai ar gael i ddisgyblion. Byddai cael dewis o 25 o bynciau dal yn ddewis go eang.

[70] Hoffwn wneud dau bwynt cyflym. Mae'r cyntaf ynglŷn â'ch cwestiwn blaenorol ar pam nad yw'r ochr alwedigaethol yn llifo i mewn i'r ochr academiaidd. Mae hwn yn gwestiwn pwysig ac mae angen i adolygiad cymwysterau Jeff Cuthbert, sy'n cael ei gadeirio gan Huw Evans, edrych ar hyn, oherwydd mae cwestiynau mawr yn codi. Mae ganddynt flwyddyn o'u blaenau i edrych ar hyn ac i gymryd tystiolaeth. Gobeithiaf yn wir fod hyn ar yr agenda.

[71] Mae gennyf un pwynt mewn ymateb i gwestiwn Julie ynghylch symudiad posibl i system fwy trydyddol. Yr ydym hefyd yn cynrychioli aelodau mewn addysg bellach, felly yr ydym yn gweld rhinweddau darpariaeth chweched dosbarth ac addysg bellach, ond un peth pwysig i'w grybwyll yw'r ffaith nad yw addysg bellach, er gwaethaf llawer o welliannau, yn gallu darparu cyrsiau cyfrwng Cymraeg, neu o leiaf ddim mewn digon o bynciau nac yn ddigon cyson ar hyn o bryd. Byddai hynny'n rheswm i beidio â rhuthro'n rhy gyflym i system gyfan gwbl drydyddol.

[72] **Christine Chapman:** We now move on to Rex and will then take a final comment from Simon. I am keen to move on.

[73] **Mr Phillips:** I have one point on the number of courses. Although 30 courses will be on offer, I do not know whether any work has been done to look at whether all of those 30 courses are taken up or whether they have been able to be run. The funding is a factor in that anyway, because of the viability issue. Even though children may have opted for a course, they may not be able to take up that option because there are not enough other pupils willing to do so.

[74] **Simon Thomas:** Mae Rex eisoes wedi gwneud un o'r pwyntiau yr oeddwn eisiau ei godi, sef bod 30 cwrs ar gael, yn ymarferol, ond nad ydynt yn bodoli ym mhob ysgol; nid oes dwywaith am hynny. I ddychwelyd at bwynt Rebecca, os oes gennych bum cwrs galwedigaethol allan o'r 30 cwrs, ac yr ydych yn symud, dywedwch, at bump allan o 25, yr ydych yn ffocysu mwy mewn gwirionedd ar y galwedigaethol. Yr ydych yn cryfhau'r elfen alwedigaethol o fewn yr arlwy sydd ar gael. Felly, o ran y

have much of an impact on the variety of courses available to pupils. Having a choice of 25 courses would still be a broad range.

I would like to make two brief points. The first is on your previous question with regard to qualifications and why the vocational side does not flow into the academic side. That is an important question that Jeff Cuthbert's review of qualifications, which is chaired by Huw Evans, needs to look at, because huge questions arise. They have a year ahead of them to look at this and to gather evidence. I very much hope that this is on their agenda.

I have one point in response to Julie's question regarding a possible move to a more tertiary system. We also represent members in further education, so we see the strengths in sixth form and FE provision, but one important thing to mention is that FE, despite many improvements, is unable to provide Welsh-medium courses, or at least not in enough subjects or consistently enough at the moment. That would be a reason not to rush headlong into a totally tertiary system.

Simon Thomas: Rex has already made one of the points that I wanted to raise, which is that, practically, 30 courses are available, but they are not provided in every school; there is no doubt about that. To return to Rebecca's point, if you have five vocational courses out of 30, and you move, say, to five out of 25, you are actually focusing more on vocational courses. You are increasing the vocational element within the whole offer that is available. So, with regard to the point that was made earlier about getting pupils to see

pwynt a wnaethpwyd yn gynharach ynghylch cael disgyblion i weld y llif galwedigaethol a'r llif academiaidd yn uno, a fyddai ffocysu mwy ar y galwedigaethol, a'r cyfyngiad ar gyrsiau eraill, yn arwain at well ystyriaeth o'r llif galwedigaethol?

the vocational and academic streams uniting, would that greater focus on the vocational, and the limiting of other courses, lead to a better understanding of the vocational stream?

[75] **Dr Dixon:** That is an interesting idea. I am thinking on my feet here, but, yes, it may do that. There are fundamental problems and, as Simon said, we tend to see youngsters opting out, and their parents quite often pressurising them into those things. We need to get better information, which, as Jenny said, is out there. The Association of Colleges in England showed recently that youngsters were woefully informed about the range of options open to them. So, there is a role for Careers Wales or its successor to push out more information on that.

[76] We can juggle the numbers, but we must remember that the increase in the vocational offer has been a good thing. We want to preserve that, but whether that would then mean a reduction in the academic offer is something that, as Rebecca said, Jeff Cuthbert's review will consider, hopefully in a meaningful way. I suspect that there are academic qualifications out there that are not leading very far. For example, if you want to be a lawyer, there is no need for you to have done A-level law.

[77] **Christine Chapman:** I remind Members and witnesses that we have about 20 minutes left and that we still have some really big issues that we want to raise. Aled is next on Welsh-medium education.

[78] **Aled Roberts:** Dylwn nodi bod fy ngwraig yn ddarlithydd mewn addysg bellach, a'i bod yn gyfrifol am ddarpariaeth Gymraeg. Mae tystiolaeth UCAC yn awgrymu bod gwahaniaeth o ran y ddarpariaeth ar y 30 cwrs mewn ardaloedd lle nad yw'r galw am ddarpariaeth Gymraeg yn cael ei fodloni. A allwch ehangu ar hynny?

Aled Roberts: I should note that my wife is a further education lecturer, and is responsible for Welsh-medium education. The evidence from UCAC suggests that there is variation with regard to the provision of the 30 courses in areas where the demand for Welsh-medium provision is not satisfied. Could you expand on that?

[79] **Ms Williams:** Credaf mai'r hyn a ddywedwyd yn y dystiolaeth oedd bod y rhan fwyaf yn cyrraedd y 30. Felly, maent yn cwrdd â gofynion y Mesur, ond, y tu hwnt i hynny, efallai nad yw'r ddarpariaeth yn gallu bod yr un mor eang yn y sector cyfrwng Cymraeg ag yn y sector cyfrwng Saesneg, gan ei bod yn anos cynnal y cyrsiau hynny gan fod llai o bartneriaid amlwg i gydweithio â nhw. Credaf eu bod, yn rhyfeddol, yn llwyddo i gyrraedd y 30 a'r pum cwrs galwedigaethol.

Ms Williams: What we said in the evidence was that most achieve that 30-course requirement. So, they satisfy the requirements of the Measure, but, beyond that it is possible that the provision is not as broad in the Welsh-medium sector as in the English-medium sector, because it is more difficult to sustain those courses with fewer obvious partners to collaborate with. I think that they are, incredibly, succeeding in reaching the 30 and the five vocational courses.

[80] **Aled Roberts:** A oes problem yn codi oherwydd nad yw'r darparwyr Cymraeg o fewn ffiniau awdurdod? Efallai y gofynnir i blant groesi ffiniau awdurdodau lleol.

Aled Roberts: Does a problem arise from Welsh-language providers not being within an authority's boundaries? Perhaps the children are required to cross local authority boundaries.

[81] **Ms Williams:** Mae hynny yn

Ms Williams: That does happen. The burden

digwydd. Mae'r baich wedi cwmpo ar benaethiaid ysgolion a rheolwyr ysgol i sicrhau bod y trefniadau hyn ar waith—mae hynny wedi bod yn faich ar bob pennaeth ac arweinydd ysgol drwy Gymru gyfan, ond yn fwy felly yn y sector cyfrwng Cymraeg. Bu gofyn iddynt fod yn fwy creadigol i wneud i hyn weithio i gyrraedd y 30 o gyrsiau. Efallai fod mwy o ddibyniaeth ar ddarparwyr preifat i ddarparu cyrsiau, sy'n golygu wedyn gwaith gweinyddol, cyfreithiol a chytundebol dwys, cymhleth ac anghyfarwydd i benaethiaid. Mae'r trefniadau teithio yr ydym wedi cyfeirio atynt, a hefyd mae materion megis sicrhau ansawdd. Pan fyddwch yn cydweithio ag ysgol arall, mae'n rhwyddach os gallwch ddibynnu mwy ar ansawdd y ddarpariaeth ac, i raddau helaeth, mae hynny'n wir am golegau addysg bellach hefyd. Ond pan gewch ddarparwr preifat i ddarparu cwrs, mae'r cwestiynau hynny'n codi. Materion fel y rheini sy'n codi, ac maent yn codi ymhob sector, ond yn fwy yn y sector cyfrwng Cymraeg o ran cyrraedd y 30.

[82] **Aled Roberts:** A oes awgrym y bydd cwtogi ar y grant teithio yn golygu mwy o broblemau i addysg Gymraeg?

[83] **Ms Williams:** Nid oes amheuaeth gennyf y bydd yn achosi mwy o broblemau. Bydd yn fwy o her o lawer i gyrraedd y 30 ar ôl torri'r grant. Mae'r sector cyfrwng Cymraeg yn fwy dibynnol ar y grantiau hynny i gyrraedd y 30, oherwydd y pellter rhwng partneriaid posibl.

[84] **Keith Davies:** I Rebecca y mae'r cwestiwn hwn. I ymateb i'r twf yn addysg Gymraeg, mae nifer o siroedd yn creu ysgolion dwy ffrwd—gallaf feddwl am un man yn awr. Dywedwch yn eich tystiolaeth y bydd cynnig 30 o gyrsiau mewn ysgolion dwy ffrwd yn golygu cael dosbarthiadau bach iawn yn y naill iaith neu'r llall. A yw'n beth da i'r siroedd ymateb i'r cynnydd yn y galw am addysg Gymraeg drwy gynyddu nifer yr ysgolion dwy ffrwd?

[85] **Ms Williams:** Mae'r sefyllfa'n amrywio o sir i sir, gan ddibynnu ar ddwysedd y boblogaeth ac ar faint o rieni a disgyblion sy'n dewis astudio drwy gyfrwng y Saesneg neu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Os oes digon o blant, bydd hi wastad yn well

has fallen on school heads and school managers to ensure that arrangements are in place—that has been a burden on every head and school leader throughout Wales, but more so in the Welsh-medium sector. They have been required to be more creative to get it to work to reach the 30 courses. Perhaps there is greater reliance on private providers to provide courses, which in turn means intensive, complicated and unfamiliar work on the administrative, legal and contractual side of things for heads. There are the travel arrangements that we have referred to, and there are also issues such as quality assurance. When you collaborate with another school, it is easier if you can rely more on the quality of the provision, and, to a fair degree, that is now true of further education colleges, too. However, when you have a private provider running a course, those questions arise. Those are the sorts of issues that arise, as they do in every sector, but more so in the Welsh-medium sector in reaching the target of 30 courses.

Aled Roberts: Is there any suggestion that cutting the travel grant will mean more problems for Welsh-medium education?

Ms Williams: I have no doubt that it will cause more problems. It will be a much greater challenge to reach the 30 mark once the travel grant has been cut. The Welsh-medium sector is more dependent on those grants to reach the 30 mark, because of the distance between potential partners.

Keith Davies: This question is to Rebecca. In response to the growth in Welsh-medium education, a number of counties are creating dual-stream schools—I can think of one place now. You say in your evidence that to offer 30 courses in dual-stream schools will mean very small class sizes in either language. Is it a good thing that the counties are responding to the increase in demand for Welsh-medium education by increasing the number of dual-stream schools?

Ms Williams: The situation varies from county to county, depending on population density and the number of parents and pupils who choose English or Welsh as the medium of study. If there are enough children, it is always preferable to create a Welsh-medium

creu ysgol cyfrwng Cymraeg. Gwyddom mai hynny sydd orau o ran trwytho plant yn yr iaith a sicrhau eu bod yn dod mas yn unigolion cwbl ddwyieithog.

school. We know that that is best with regard to immersing children in the language and in ensuring that they emerge as completely bilingual individuals.

[86] Er hynny, credaf fod yn rhaid derbyn nad oes digon o ran nifer mewn rhai ardaloedd, a'r dewis nesaf yw ysgolion dwy ffrwd, gan fod y dewis hwnnw'n cynnig darpariaeth dda iawn mewn ardaloedd lle na fyddai'n bosibl cynnal darpariaeth gyfan gwbl cyfrwng Cymraeg mewn un sefydliad. Felly, ni fyddwn yn dadlau yn erbyn ysgolion dwy ffrwd, ond fel y'i gwelaf, os oes sector sy'n ei chael hi'n anos byth na'r sector cyfrwng Cymraeg i ddod i ben â'r Mesur, y sector ysgolion dwy ffrwd yw hwnnw oherwydd, yn naturiol, bydd y niferoedd yn llai eto. Maent yn aml yn ysgolion eithaf bach yn y lle cyntaf, ac efallai y bydd hanner y plant yn dilyn cwrs yn Saesneg a hanner yn ei ddilyn yn Gymraeg. Mae'r heriau'n anferthol.

Nevertheless, I believe that we must accept that, in those areas where the numbers do not add up, the next option is dual-stream schools, as that option offers good provision in areas where it is not possible to support provision entirely through the medium of Welsh in one institution. So, I would not argue against dual-stream schools, but as I see it, if there is one sector that has it worse still than the Welsh-medium sector in coping with the Measure, then that is the dual-stream sector because, naturally, the numbers will be smaller still. They are often fairly small schools to begin with, and perhaps half the children will follow a course in English and half will follow it in Welsh. The challenges are immense.

[87] **Suzy Davies:** The Minister is showing some enthusiasm at the moment for extending digital learning—e-learning, Facebook learning or whatever you want to call it. Do you think that that is an effective way of learning? Can you give examples of when it works and when it does not?

10.00 a.m.

[88] **Mr Bracken:** In terms of digital learning, there are a number of ways of doing it. You can look at a virtual learning environment for pupils, video-conferencing and online materials. All of those have their place, but they all require pupils to learn in a different way, which many of them are comfortable in doing so because they are often far more au fait and comfortable with technology than the teachers. So, there are great potential advantages of doing this with regard to sharing and networking and with pupils being able to teach themselves and learn from each other across Wales. However, I am not sure what research has been done as to whether it enhances their learning or whether it just allows them to learn in a different way, if you get my drift. It may allow them to learn through a different medium, but more research needs to be done to see whether it is a better way of doing it than a more traditional method.

[89] **Suzy Davies:** Has it helped at all with the issue about small classes and distances between schools, especially with regard to video learning? Are there certain subjects where it works better than others?

[90] **Mr Bracken:** There are examples of where that works where some students have a lecture remotely. It would depend on the nature of the students and the subject and whether the students would be supervised at the centre. So, there are pockets where it works effectively, due really to a particular type of student. Many students would not be comfortable in having it over an extended period of time; it may be useful for short parts of their learning or for a particular module or topic, but a complete diet of that would probably be against the learner's interest.

[91] **Suzy Davies:** I struggle to see quite how it would work with some of the vocational courses. That is why I was trying to press you on where you think it works best and where it does not work at all, but perhaps one of the others will answer.

[92] **Christine Chapman:** Before that, I will ask Jenny to ask a question on the same topic, and then you can answer, followed by Rex and Rebecca.

[93] **Jenny Rathbone:** I wonder whether you can give any examples where pupils are using the travel time effectively with some i-pod learning. It would not work for vocational courses, but I would have thought that it worked well for more academic subjects.

[94] **Mr Bracken:** There is concern about the dead time that pupils have when they travel, which can be quite considerable. Yes, there are huge opportunities for them to use mobile devices, and they could look at blogs or create their own blogs, they could listen to podcasts and so on, so there are all sorts of opportunities, but people need to think outside of the box.

[95] **Mr Phillips:** The jury is still out on the merits of digital learning. I am intrigued by the suggestion that children should continue with their learning when they travel, because they tend to enjoy themselves in different ways when they travel on the bus. It is a very big ask; it is like having a mobile classroom in a way. On a more serious note about the idea of teaching by video and so on, I come back to the contractual issues. We have had experiences where schools have said that they are stopping a course because they are going over to a digital learning programme provided by a different provider. There are many contractual issues involved. We would argue that there should be things such as teaching transfers if the programme is provided by a different provider. These are not straightforward issues when it comes down to the contractual issues relating to the teachers who have historically delivered the courses if you look at delivering them in a different way. I am not saying that it is not surmountable, but issues would be raised on that.

[96] **Suzy Davies:** Cwestiwn i Rebecca sydd gennyf. A yw wedi helpu ysgolion Cymraeg o ran cydweithio? Yr wyf yn cyfeirio at y pellter yn benodol.

Suzy Davies: I have a question for Rebecca. Has it helped Welsh-medium schools with regard to collaboration? I refer to the distance in particular.

[97] **Ms Williams:** Mae nifer o ysgolion wedi mentro i'r maes hwn am y tro cyntaf oherwydd y Mesur, a chafwyd llawer o lwyddiant. Mae wedi galluogi sefydliadau i gydweithio ac mae'n creu grwpiau mwy o faint a hyfyw sy'n eu galluogi i gynnal rhai cyrsiau na fyddai'n bosibl fel arall oherwydd niferoedd bach. Mae'r athrawon yn dweud wrthym ei fod yn gweithio orau gyda'r grŵp ôl-16 oherwydd eu bod yn fwy aeddfed, maen nhw wedi dewis eu pynciau ac yn ymddwyn yn well mewn sefyllfa o'r fath. Mae'r athrawon hefyd yn dweud ei bod yn gweithio orau pan fydd rhai sesiynau fideogynadleda a rhai sesiynau wyneb yn wyneb. Felly, mae angen cyfuniad o'r ddau beth. Credaf fod y grŵp rhwng 14 ac 16 oed yn fwy problematig o ran dysgu o bell. Yn aml, mae'n rhaid cael aelod o staff yn yr ystafell gyda nhw yn goruchwyllo, sy'n golygu bod unrhyw arbedion ariannol yn

Ms Williams: Many schools have ventured into this area for the first time because of the Measure, and there has been a great deal of success. It has enabled institutions to collaborate and it creates larger and more viable groups, which allows them to offer some courses that would not be possible otherwise because of small numbers. Teachers are telling us that it works best with the post-16 group because they are more mature, they have chosen their subjects and their behaviour is better in such situations. Teachers also tell us that it works best when there are some video-conference sessions and some face-to-face sessions. Therefore, a combination of the two is needed. I believe that the 14-16 group is more problematic in relation to distance learning. It is often necessary to have a member of staff in the room with them to supervise, which means that any financial savings begin to disappear

dechrau diflannu a'i bod yn llai cost- and that it is less cost-effective. It is
 effeithiol. Dim ond o safbwynt disgyblaeth ac necessary to have someone in the room only
 ymddygiad y mae angen person yno. to ensure discipline and good behaviour.

[98] **Lynne Neagle:** I would like to ask you about learner support services. How consistently do you feel that they are being delivered across Wales? Is there substantial variation between local authority areas?

[99] **Mr Phillips:** There is variation because of the way in which the services are funded. There is an issue around support services at the moment and the way in which they will be delivered because of the consortia arrangements that are being looked at and the changes to the ways in which schools are provided with that support. The support that schools can provide for learners is largely down to them rather than there being external support that they can bring into the school. It always comes back to the funding situation and what can be afforded.

[100] We have talked about pupils with special educational needs and we have included in our paper information regarding the type of courses that they can study and the funding streams for those courses within the learning pathways. We have mentioned the fact that if the course is below level 2 funding, then the school has to provide the funding rather than being able to draw on a central learning pathways grant. We think that that is something that this committee should look at and consider carefully, because you are affecting the most vulnerable. It comes back to some of the debate that we have had regarding parity of esteem, qualifications, and so on. Let us not belittle a course that is below level 2, because, for some children, that is the best that they will be able to achieve and we should be celebrating their success if they achieve in those courses, not making it difficult for them to study those courses.

[101] **Lynne Neagle:** I would like to ask you about independence, because I know that you had concerns about that, which you have raised previously. How effectively is the learning support being delivered independently of the schools' own interests—or, is the answer to that question that it is not at all?

[102] **Mr Phillips:** Perhaps I could better understand the question. Do you mean the support services that the local authority would bring in outside the school? That is, the additional support that it would put in, or the support from other agencies and other services?

[103] **Lynne Neagle:** The support from outside.

[104] **Mr Phillips:** I do not have any evidence to present to you on that; I do not know whether others have. However, it is clear that, in times of constraint, those are the areas that are squeezed and the support reduces. In some local authorities, it comes down to the way in which schools are funded and the delegation of resources. If you delegate more funding to schools, then you retain less funding centrally to provide those support services. We have always been very clear about the fact that we value central support services and we value the services that schools can draw on, which they can go to for support that can then be targeted at areas of need. However, if you devolve more and more money to schools, you reduce the ability of a local authority to provide that central service and target that support where it is needed.

[105] **Dr Dixon:** I agree with a lot of what Rex has said. As collaboration grows with the consortia, we are looking to see an improvement in the support services in many areas. Our members have reported that it is very patchy, depending on which local authority you are in. However, if you are driving at the sort of advice that children are given, a very good study was undertaken by the Association of Colleges in England. I suspect that that holds true for us

in Wales; there is some stuff out there. Many youngsters are not aware of the full range of the offer available to them, either in terms of what they can study and what qualifications are on offer or in the sense of knowing where they could do those things. That is a nut that we need to crack to ensure that, at a fairly early age, youngsters can make properly informed choices. We have done that in some areas, but in other areas that is still not the case.

[106] **Simon Thomas:** Mae gennyf ychydig gwestiynau ar rai o'r materion yr ydym wedi'u trafod. Ar bwynt Philip Dixon, pwy sydd yn dylanwadu fwyaf ar ddisgybl 14 oed, er enghraifft? Gyrfa Cymru, rhieni ynteu athrawon sy'n dylanwadu a ydynt yn gwneud cwrs academiaidd neu gwrs galwedigaethol?

Simon Thomas: I have a few questions touching on some of the issues that we have already discussed. On Philip Dixon's point, who has the biggest influence on the pupil aged 14, for example? Is it Careers Wales, parents or teachers who influence whether they take a vocational or academic course?

[107] **Dr Dixon:** I think that studies show that it is parents, undoubtedly. It is parents' perceptions of where the course is, which may not marry with reality and which may be a generation out of date. We have not done much work, to refer back to Lynne's point, to tackle some of those perceptions.

[108] **Simon Thomas:** Fel rhiant i ddisgybl sydd newydd fynd drwy'r broses hon, byddwn yn cytuno. Ond, yr wyf yn falch bod tystiolaeth, neu rhyw fath o dystiolaeth, fod hynny'n wir. Ar sail profiad, pe na bawn yn y sefyllfa hon, ni fyddwn yn deall y system, drwy'r ysgol neu drwy unrhyw ddarparwr arall. Felly, yr wyf yn gofyn ichi ymhelaethu ar yr hyn yr ydych wedi cyffwrdd arno. Pa gamau y dylem eu cymryd i sicrhau bod rhieni a'r gymuned yn ehangach, gan gynnwys y gymuned fusnes yn lleol, yn deall y broses sydd ar waith?

Simon Thomas: As a parent to a pupil who has just gone through this process, I agree with you on that. However, I am happy that there is evidence, or least some sort of evidence, that that is true. On the basis of my experience, if I was not in the situation I am in, I would not understand anything about this system through the school or any other provider. So, I am asking you to expand on what you have just touched on. What steps should be taken to get the parents and the wider community, including the business community locally, to understand the process that is now in place?

[109] **Dr Dixon:** How long have you got?

[110] **Simon Thomas:** About three minutes. [*Laughter.*]

[111] **Dr Dixon:** I think that parental engagement is always a problem, because what we see in other areas as well is that the youngsters of the parents who tend to be engaged almost do not need it. It is the parents who are not engaged, for all sorts of understandable reasons, who need to be more engaged. That was a real difficult one to look at. It goes back to a point that we have tried to make in the paper and elsewhere about looking at this in pathway terms as opposed to qualification terms. We have tended to look at it too atomistically—there is a hurdle at 16, then there is another one at 18 and so on.

[112] We are asked what we want to be when we grow up: I still do not know, but I think that we can see that youngsters have some idea of the area that they would like to work in. It may be medicine, areas relating to the law, social care and so on. We need to try to expand the way in which they can see the different offers and open their horizons so that they can see that there is a whole world out there and that they do not have to decide at the age of 14 that they are definitely going to be a doctor, lawyer, social worker or whatever. However, as they know the sort of things that interest them and the sort of areas that they want to go into, we need to tell them about the options and the courses that can take them on those pathways, ultimately into employment, which is a key part of this.

[113] However, that is a longer-term process, and it is something that schools need to be more engaged in, probably before we get to 14, which is the point I think that Simon has made to me. We need to think about this at an earlier age and get youngsters to think about their future career paths, not in a sad sense, but so that they have some sense of where they want to go and what they want to do with their lives at an earlier stage.

[114] **Simon Thomas:** I noticed the reference to clear pathways in your evidence, and you referred to that earlier. I can see that working post-16, but are we really asking too much of youngsters to make even those broad-brush decisions at 14?

[115] **Dr Dixon:** Possibly. I do not know. However, you see that youngsters know whether they are interested in hands-on jobs. Others perhaps want to pursue a more rarefied academic career. Some are interested in—

[116] **Simon Thomas:** I will press you on the hands-on bit, for example, because you said that this is one of the successes of learning pathways. This is a very strange circumstance, but unless they are involved in business themselves, they will not have had that hands-on experience. It will not have been presented to them in any meaningful way by the time that they get to 14, surely. That is the case in most institutions, in most schools.

[117] **Dr Dixon:** I wonder whether a lot goes on outside the institution however, with regard to the things that they are interested in. Thinking of my nephews, one is very interested in rally cars. That has been there from a fairly early age, so he is looking at that sort of thing. You cannot make a hard and fast rule, but I think that it is a case of trying to identify what youngsters are interested in. If they are interested in something, they will want to build on that. Too often, perhaps, we have pushed them down paths that they are not really interested in.

10.15 a.m.

[118] **Simon Thomas:** Gorffennaf gyda rhywbeth sydd wedi codi o dystiolaeth Rebecca Williams, ond sydd yn bwnc cyffredinol. Mae system fandio ar fin cael ei chyflwyno. Unwaith eto, bydd rhieni yn edrych ar y system fandio ac yn gwneud penderfyniadau ar ei sail ynglŷn â llwyddiant yr ysgol. Yr ydych wedi cyfeirio at y posibilrwydd bod canlyniadau anffodus i hyn gan fod y system fandio yn cynnwys, er enghraifft, bum pwnc gan gynnwys y Gymraeg, Saesneg a mathemateg, lle mae'r system llwybrau dysgu yn edrych ar bum pwnc gan gynnwys un galwedigaethol. A allwch ymhelaethu ychydig ar y mater hwn a'r gofidiau sydd gennych am y posibilrwydd y bydd hyn yn gwyrō'r sefyllfa yn anffodus mewn rhai sefydliadau?

Simon Thomas: I will finish with something that has arisen from Rebecca Williams's evidence, but is a general point. A banding system is about to be introduced. Once again, parents will look at the banding system and make decisions regarding the success of a school on that basis. You have referred to the possibility that there are unfortunate outcomes to this, because the banding system includes, for example, five subjects including Welsh, English and mathematics, whereas the learning pathways system looks at five subjects including one vocational course. Will you elaborate on this and on your concerns regarding the possibility that this unfortunately skews the situation in some institutions?

[119] **Ms Williams:** Mae'n rhaid i Lywodraeth Cymru fod yn ofalus, wrth ddod â blaenoriaethau newydd, nad yw'n dadwneud y gwaith da y mae eisoes wedi ei wneud mewn meysydd eraill, ac nad yw'n

Ms Williams: The Welsh Government needs to be careful in bringing forward new policy priorities, that it does not undo the good work that it has already done in other areas, and that it does not create outcomes that conflict

creu cymhellion sy'n tynnu'n groes i bolisiâu eraill. Felly, mae'r Mesur dysgu a sgiliau wedi bod yn llwyddiannus. Yr wyf yn credu, drwy weithredu'r Mesur mewn ysgolion a cholegau, bod y ddarpariaeth wedi'i hehangu. Ni wn a oes data yn dangos hyn eto, ond yr wyf yn synhwyro, ar sail yr hyn mae ysgolion yn ei ddweud, bod canlyniadau trothwy lefel 2, mwy na thebyg, wedi codi yn sgîl y Mesur, oherwydd bod mwy o blant yn gwneud pynciau sydd yn gweddu'n well iddynt.

with other policies. So, the learning and skills Measure has been successful. I believe that, in implementing the Measure in schools and colleges, provision has been extended. I do not know whether there are data to demonstrate this as of yet, but I sense, on the basis of what schools are saying, that it is likely that level 2 threshold results have improved as a result of the Measure, because more children are studying subjects that suit them better.

[120] Ni fydd hyn yn cael ei ddangos yn y trothwy lefel 2+, sef y fersiwn sy'n cynnwys Saesneg, Cymraeg a mathemateg, sy'n fwy cyfyng o'r herwydd. Dyna'r ffactor mae'r bandio yn ei ystyried. Mae'r bandio hefyd yn cymryd sgôr pwyntiau wedi'i gyfyngu yn hytrach na'i ehangu. Mae rhain yn faterion ystadegol, technegol. Yr wyf yn gweld y cymhellion dros y mathau o ddata mae'r Llywodraeth wedi'u cynnwys. Mae'r Llywodraeth am flaenoriaethu llythrenedd a rhifedd, sy'n gymeradwy. Ni fyddai neb yn dadlau gyda'r blaenoriaethau hyn. Mae angen bod yn ofalus nad yw'r pethau hyn yn gwrthdaro â'i gilydd nac yn creu cymhellion croes. Yr wyf yn gwybod bod ysgolion yn teimlo eu bod wedi gwneud gwaith aruthrol i weithredu'r Mesur ac nad ydynt yn cael eu cymeradwyo na'u gwobrwyo. Teimplant fod hyn yn cael ei ddiystyrru oherwydd y mathau penodol o ddata a ddefnyddir gan y system fandio i gategoreiddio ysgolion.

That perhaps will not be demonstrated in the level 2+ threshold, which includes English, Welsh and mathematics, and which is narrower as a result. That is the factor that the banding takes into account. The banding also looks at the capped point score, rather than the broader score. These are statistical and technical matters. I understand the motivation for the kinds of data that the Government has chosen. It wants to prioritise literacy and numeracy, which is to be applauded. No-one would argue with these priorities. We need to be careful that these things do not conflict with each other or create conflicting incentives. I know that schools feel that they have done an enormous amount of work in implementing the Measure and that they are not being rewarded or recognised in any way for doing so. They feel that it is being ignored because of the specific kinds of data used by the banding system to categorise schools.

[121] **Christine Chapman:** We now need to close this session. If Members have any questions that they would have liked to ask, but time did not allow, they should let the clerks know. I am sure that the witnesses will be happy to receive further questions in writing. I thank the witnesses. It has been an interesting session. We have looked at the subject matter in a great deal of depth. A transcript of today's evidence will be produced, and you will receive a copy to check for accuracy. Thank you for attending.

10.19 a.m.

Gweithredu Mesur Dysgu a Sgiliau (Cymru) 2009: Sesiwn Dystiolaeth Implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009: Evidence Session

[122] **Christine Chapman:** We will now take evidence from representatives of the University and College Union Wales. I welcome Llew Williams, political liaison officer, and Ian Bosworth, FE lecturer and chair of the further education sector committee. You are both very welcome. We have received your papers, and Members will have read them carefully, so are you happy for us to start with some questions? I see that you are; thank you.

[123] **Aled Roberts:** Yn eich tystiolaeth ysgrifenedig, dywedwch y bydd angen amser i'r gyfundrefn gydweithio newydd fwrw gwreiddiau, ond dywedwch hefyd bod y gyfundrefn flaenorol yn eithaf niweidiol. Pa gynnydd a welwch o ran y gyfundrefn gydweithio hon, a pha heriau sydd eto i'w goresgyn?

Aled Roberts: In your written evidence, you say that time will be needed for the new collaboration system to become embedded, but you also say that the previous regime had been quite damaging. What progress do you see in this regime, and what challenges have yet to be addressed?

[124] **Mr Williams:** A gaf ofyn beth yr ydych yn ei olygu wrth 'gyfundrefn'?

Mr Williams: May I ask what you mean by 'regime'?

[125] **Aled Roberts:** Y system yr ydych yn sôn amdani o ran y patrwm o gydweithio. Dywedwch y bydd yn cymryd amser i'r system lwyddo. Dywedwch bod y system flaenorol, lle yr oedd llawer iawn mwy o gystadleuaeth rhwng sefydliadau, yn niweidiol. Pa gynnydd yr ydych wedi ei weld erbyn hyn, a pha heriau sy'n dal i fodoli?

Aled Roberts: The system that you mentioned with regard to the pattern of collaboration. You say that it will take time for that system to succeed. You say that the previous system, in which there was a lot of competition between institutions, was damaging. What progress do you see to date, and what challenges remain?

[126] **Mr Williams:** Dywedwn eich bod yn iawn i ddweud bod marchnad yn y sector o'r blaen, yn enwedig yn y sector ôl-16, gyda cholegau ac ysgolion yn cystadlu i sicrhau niferoedd myfyrwyr. Ers cyflwyno'r Mesur, yr ydym wedi gweld bod ysgolion yn cydweithio'n well a bod rhan o hynny oherwydd i'r elfen o farchnad gael ei dileu, gan fod ysgolion a cholegau'n gorfod cydweithio â'i gilydd i sicrhau'r canlyniadau gorau i'w myfyrwyr. O'r herwydd, mae'r myfyrwyr yn cael dewis lle maent am fynd, yn hytrach na'u tynnu rhwng y coleg a'r ysgol. O aros yn yr ysgol, mae'r athrawon yn eich adnabod ers pum mlynedd, sy'n bwynt teg, ond gall coleg eich denu drwy ddweud bod gwell cyfleusterau a bywyd gwahanol yno. Y pethau hynny sy'n atynnu myfyrwyr o ran lle maent am ddysgu.

Mr Williams: I would say that you are right to say that there was a market in the sector previously, particularly in the post-16 sector, with colleges and schools competing to safeguard student numbers. Since the introduction of the Measure, we have seen that schools collaborate better and that part of that is because the market element has been removed, as schools and colleges have to collaborate with each other to secure the best outcomes for their students. As a result, students can choose where they want to go, rather than being pulled between college and school. If you stay in school, the teachers will have known you for five years, which is a fair point, but colleges can attract you by referring to the fact that they offer better facilities and a different lifestyle. That is what attracts students to where they want to learn.

[127] O ran y problemau a ragwelwn ar hyn o bryd, mae'r farchnad yn parhau mewn rhai ysgolion, efallai. Yn anecdotaidd, gwelwn fod rhai ysgolion yn ceisio cynnig y 30 pwnc dan y Mesur. Drwy wneud hynny, gallant gadw gafaél yn y myfyrwyr, gan beidio â rhoi cyfle iddynt fynd i goleg addysg bellach. Yr enghraifft a roddwn yn ein papur yw peirianeg mecanyddol. Os ydych am wneud peirianeg mecanyddol yn 14 oed, bydd y cyfleusterau sydd gan goleg addysg bellach o safon well ac yn fwy modern na'r hyn y gall unrhyw ysgol ei gynnig. Rhaid

As for the problems that we currently foresee, the market persists in some schools, perhaps. Anecdotally, we find that some schools seek to offer the 30 subjects that they are supposed to offer under the Measure. In doing so, they can keep a hold on students, without giving them an opportunity to attend a further education college. The example that we gave in our paper was mechanical engineering. If you want to take mechanical engineering from the age of 14, the facilities available at a further education college will be superior and more modern than those that any school

sicrhau bod y myfyrwyr hynny'n cael mynediad i gyfleusterau o'r safon orau i gael y profiad dysgu gorau. Yn y pen draw, mae hyn yn ymwneud â chael y canlyniad gorau i'r myfyrwyr o ran eu profiad dysgu.

could offer. You have to ensure that those students have access to facilities of the highest quality to have the best learning experience. At the end of the day, it is about students getting the best outcome from their learning experience.

[128] **Julie Morgan:** Basically, what you are saying is that the market element is still there.

[129] **Mr Bosworth:** Yes. With the Measure coming in, you have seen increased collaboration, particularly among the vocational areas, in that schools may work on level 1 qualifications, after which students may transfer to a college for higher qualifications. That type of collaboration is very effective. What we want to see is the removal of the market from the education system so that it can work effectively.

[130] There are areas where collaboration has not taken place, however, and it has often been in the traditional areas of A-levels. We can see very much that there has been competition in the past, and in a whole range of colleges—again, this is anecdotal—the number running A-level courses has shrunk and shrunk, because schools have tended to cling on to the students, and for understandable reasons, too, because it is very important in terms of the funding issue. What we want to see is a situation in which the student has genuine choice. It may be that staying on at school is the right choice, but it may also be that the change of environment—and colleges do offer a very different environment to schools—would benefit the learner. We have seen A-level programmes closed in a number of colleges across Wales for two reasons. First, in some areas, the number of learners has dropped. That is understandable—school sixth forms have become smaller, as have colleges. However, there has not been collaboration between schools and colleges. UCU's position is not to say that students should be in one place or the other; we are saying that genuine collaboration should give them real choice and enable them to follow the most effective pathway for their education. I do not think that that is happening with post-16 students.

[131] **Julie Morgan:** What do you think could be done about it?

[132] **Mr Bosworth:** That is the key question. There must be some legislative mechanism that requires real collaboration between colleges and schools. Obviously, in certain areas, there is tertiary education; we are not arguing that that is the solution. We are saying that, where that works, that is fine, but, where there are existing school sixth forms and colleges in an area, and there are existing programmes, there must be a way for those schools and colleges to work together and to do so effectively. There are examples where they are competing—not far from here, in fact—and that cannot be good.

[133] **Mr Williams:** Following on from what Ian has said, it is important to note that there are some really good examples of collaboration. There is one example in east Carmarthenshire, where a reorganisation is under way to cut the number of schools to three. That might be controversial locally, as the Member for Llanelli knows, but, as an example of how pathways can be delivered, Coleg Sir Gâr is working in collaboration with the local authority and local schools and will be given facilities in the new school buildings to deliver further education courses. So, there are examples out there that are really good. We need to highlight some of those as examples of best practice. There is no need to reinvent the wheel. We should look at what is being done, pick what works, and try to apply it.

[134] **Julie Morgan:** I am concerned about the schools that have a high academic reputation. I wonder how much they are co-operating with this agenda. I do not know what can be done to push that a bit further.

[135] **Mr Bosworth:** We would share those concerns. One thing that I would like to raise is that, in terms of choice, we are not just talking about the traditional polar opposites of whether a student should follow a set of vocational qualifications post 16 or follow A-levels. We would like to see, where appropriate, students being able to mix and match. If that is good for the student and good for the economy of Wales, then they should be able to pursue that option. Once again, only collaboration between schools and colleges can deliver that mixed education.

[136] There is an understandable inertia on the part of the sort of schools that you are talking about, because they have a very good programme. We would say that we do not want to damage the students' experience, but giving them more choice cannot do that. It can only broaden and deepen their educational opportunities. However, I do not have an answer as to how that can be achieved.

[137] **Jenny Rathbone:** I am having difficulty understanding the perverse incentives for schools to hold on to pupils who would benefit from learning in a college. Surely, where the student wants to pursue mechanical engineering, for example, or a subject that requires technical resources to be in place for the student to be able to learn effectively, the provision will not be available in schools, because they do not have such laboratories. Surely the student can remain registered at the school but can do those other courses in college. The school retains the pupil, but the pupil has much wider options. I do not quite understand why there is resistance to letting the students study certain courses in colleges.

10.30 a.m.

[138] **Mr Bosworth:** if we are talking about the post-16 student, then that is perhaps happening more with 14 to 16-year-olds, where they are coming into college for a limited amount of time. Where students are pursuing a full-time course in mechanical engineering, art design or health and social care, those are the areas where the competition still exists. It is the case that there are some things that the college is very much geared up for. Schools recognise that, but they still pursue competition. We have anecdotal evidence of that. In other areas, it is a little greyer, because subjects such as healthcare and childcare could be seen as largely being theoretical in terms of what the school or college delivers and the student then goes on to work placements. However, colleges tend to specialise in those areas, and will have a much broader team of people delivering particular modules than schools would traditionally have. Again, that is an area where collaboration can only be effective. The situation is vice versa in terms of A-level provision, as it is often schools that have a much deeper and broader experience of A-level provision. So, colleges could learn from the practices that schools are engaged in. I am not sure that that is happening because of the fears related to the funding following the student, and the sense of wanting to control where those students go. I hope that I have answered your question.

[139] **Jenny Rathbone:** Yes, I think so.

[140] **Keith Davies:** O ganlyniad i'r hyn sydd wedi digwydd dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf i addysg 14 i 16, mae rhai plant 16 oed yn cael dewis o 30 pwnc, y mae 20 y cant ohonynt yn gyrsiau galwedigaethol. Pa effaith mae hynny wedi ei gael ar addysg ôl-16? **Keith Davies:** As a result of what has happened over the past few years to 14 to 16 education, some 16-year-olds have a choice of 30 subjects, 20 per cent of which are vocational courses. What effect has that had on post-16 education?

[141] **Mr Williams:** Nid oes gennym dystiolaeth gadarn ar yr effaith mae hynny wedi ei gael—byddai'n rhaid ichi ofyn i'r **Mr Williams:** We do not have robust evidence on the impact that that has had—you would have to ask the colleges for those

colegau am yr ystadegau penodol hynny. Mae'r Mesur, fel y dywedoch, wedi cynyddu nifer y pynciau mae myfyrwyr yn gallu eu hastudio, ond mae pwyslais yn dal i fod ar bynciau academiaidd. Yr ydym yn dal i weld, efallai oherwydd y rôl mae'r wasg yn ei chwarae, mynd i brifysgol fel y *be-all and end-all*, ac mae pobl yn gorfod dilyn cyrsiau academiaidd er mwyn mynd i'r brifysgol. Dylem fod yn dweud wrth fyfyrwyr, yn enwedig myfyrwyr oedran 14 i 16, nad cyrsiau academiaidd yw'r *be-all and end-all*, ac nad oes rhaid dilyn y trywydd hynny—gallent fod yn saer coed neu wneud mecanwaith peirianyddol, er enghraifft. Mae hynny'n cael mwy o effaith ar y penderfyniadau mae myfyrwyr yn eu gwneud ar eu cyrsiau, a'r effaith mae hynny wedyn yn ei gael ar y nifer sydd yn dilyn cyrsiau academiaidd a chysiau galwedigaethol ôl-16.

[142] **Keith Davies:** Os ydych eisiau dilyn cwrs peirianeg mewn prifysgol, mae angen mathemateg a ffiseg arnoch, wrth gwrs. Clywsom dystiolaeth yn gynharach—efallai eich bod yma pan yr oedd yn cael ei roi—ei bod yn anodd cael cymysgedd o gyrsiau galwedigaethol a oedd yn cydfyw â chysiau academiaidd ar ôl 16, ac nad oedd pobl ifanc yn dewis hynny. A oes cyrsiau galwedigaethol a fyddai'n cydfynd â chysiau academiaidd yn well nag eraill?

[143] **Mr Bosworth:** There are. In certain areas such as science, there are applied science BTEC courses, which work very well alongside more traditional academic courses and which, on their own, and in conjunction with A-levels, can lead students to university. I teach a BTEC science course, and a number of our students have gone on to university this year, one to study geology at Cardiff University and another to study zoology at Bangor University. So, there are opportunities. There can be a false divide between what is seen as a vocational subject and what is seen as an academic subject. Universities are starting to become a little more responsive to the fact that not every student who comes in must have three A-levels, and that they can have a mixture of qualifications. We are at the beginning of this road—this type of approach is relatively new for colleges as well as for schools. It is an approach that says, 'We can offer you all this choice and you do not have to posit vocational against academic'. It means that you have something that gives you the opportunity, if you leave at 18, to pursue a career in science or to go on to university, and it allows you to maintain that choice at 18. That has to be good for the students and for the economy, because, if there is a job available that the student wants at the age of 18, they can choose to take it, but, if there is not, they then have the choice of going to university for a higher education qualification.

[144] **Keith Davies:** Yr oeddwn yn rhyfeddu at y dystiolaeth yn gynharach y bore yma, oherwydd yr wyf yn gwybod am yr hyn sy'n digwydd yn ardal Sir Gâr, er enghraifft. Mae pobl yn mynd i Goleg Sir

specific statistics. The Measure, as you said, has increased the number of subjects that students can study, but the emphasis continues to be on academic subjects. We still see, perhaps due to the role that the press plays, going to university as the be-all and end-all, and people have to follow academic courses to go to university. We should be saying to students, especially students aged 14 to 16, that academic courses are not the be-all and end-all, and that they do not have to go down that route—they could be a carpenter or do mechanical engineering, for example. That has more of an effect on the decisions that students make on their courses, and the effect that that has subsequently on the numbers following academic courses and vocational courses post 16.

Keith Davies: If you want to do a mechanical engineering course at university, you need mathematics and physics, of course. We heard evidence earlier—you may have been here when it was being given—that it is difficult to achieve a mix of vocational courses that sit alongside academic courses post 16, and that young people do not choose that. Are there vocational courses which sit better alongside academic courses than others?

Keith Davies: I was astounded at the evidence earlier this morning, because I know what is happening in Carmarthenshire, for example. People go to Carmarthenshire College to do an A-level in fashion, because

Gâr i wneud Safon Uwch mewn ffasiwn, oherwydd dyna lle mae'r arbenigedd, ond maent hefyd yn gwneud cyrsiau academiaidd. Felly, mae'r dewis yno. Yr ydym yn dod yn ôl at y cwestiwn blaenorol ynghylch pwy sy'n rhoi cefnogaeth i'r myfyrwyr i sicrhau eu bod yn gwneud y dewisiadau iawn.

[145] **Mr Williams:** Fel y soniwyd gynnu wrth i mi gerdded i mewn, mae rhieni'n chwarae rhan flaenllaw yn magu eu plant, ond mae'n rhaid cofio bod ysgolion hefyd yn chwarae rhan flaenllaw ym mywydau pobl ifanc. Wedi'r cyfan, maent yn mynd i'r ysgol rhwng 9 a.m. a 3 p.m. am 14 blwyddyn o'u hamser ar y blaned. Felly, mae'n rhaid ystyried yr hyn sy'n cael ei wneud mewn ysgolion i annog pobl ifanc. Nid wyf yn dweud bod yr hyn maent yn ei wneud yn beth gwael, ond rhaid cofio nad yw colegau addysg bellach yn aml yn cael gafael ar y myfyrwyr tan eu bod yn 16. Efallai bod rhai yn mynd i'r coleg pan maent yn 14 i wneud cyrsiau galwedigaethol fel rhan o'r llwybrau dysgu ond, yn aml, nid yw'r colegau'n gweld y myfyrwyr tan eu bod yn 16. Mae'r rôl y mae rhieni ac ysgolion yn ei chwarae yn eu bywydau yn un llawer mwy blaenllaw na rôl colegau addysg bellach a'u darlithwyr.

[146] **Simon Thomas:** Hoffwn ddilyn hyn ychydig yn bellach, oherwydd mae'n ymddangos i mi bod yr hinsawdd gymdeithasol yn dylanwadu ar ddewisiadau myfyrwyr yn hyn o beth. Yr ydym wedi sôn am rieni, ond mae rhieni yn pigo pethau i fyny o'r hinsawdd ehangach; hyd yn hyn, yn sicr, mae mynd i brifysgol gyda chefnidir cymysg o gyrsiau academiaidd a galwedigaethol wedi cael ei weld fel rhywbeth annhebygol. Yr ydych newydd sôn bod pethau'n newid ond un o rinweddau'r llwybrau dysgu yw eu bod yn ffordd o gadw disgyblion a fyddai fel arall efallai yn gadael yr ysgol yn 16 a cholli eu ffordd ychydig, heb wybod beth i'w wneud yng nghyd-destun ysgol neu goleg ac yn ffordd iddynt feithrin sgiliau newydd fel eu bod mewn sefyllfa wedyn i fynd ymlaen i brifysgol neu addysg uwch, oherwydd eu bod wedi cael blas ar ddyysgu mewn ffordd wahanol.

[147] A oes unrhyw dystiolaeth bod prifysgolion yn dechrau edrych o'r newydd ar ddisgyblion sy'n debygol o adael y broses

that is where the expertise is, but they also do academic courses. Therefore, the choice is there. We come back to the earlier question of who gives students the support to ensure that they make the right choices.

Mr Williams: As was being mentioned earlier as I arrived, parents play a key role in bringing up their children, but we have to remember that schools also play a key role in young people's lives. After all, they go to school between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. for 14 years of their time on the planet. Therefore, we have to consider what schools are doing to encourage young people. I am not saying that what they are doing is a bad thing, but we must remember that further education colleges often do not get hold of the students until they are 16. Some might go to college when they are 14 to do a vocational course as part of the learning pathways, but, often, the colleges do not see the students until they are 16. Parents and schools play much more prominent roles in their lives than further education colleges and their lecturers do.

Simon Thomas: I would like to follow this up a bit further, because it seems to me that the social climate influences students' choices in this respect. We have talked about parents, but parents pick things up from the wider environment; thus far, certainly, going to university with a background of a mixture of academic and vocational courses has been seen as unlikely. You have just mentioned that things are changing, but one of the merits of the learning pathways is that they are a way of keeping pupils who would otherwise perhaps leave school at 16 and start to drift, without knowing what to do, within a school or college context and a way for them to gain new skills so that they are then in a situation to go on to university or higher education, because they have had a taste of learning in a different way.

Is there any evidence that universities are starting to look afresh at pupils who are likely to leave the process that we now have in

sydd gennym yng Nghymru yn awr?

Wales?

[148] **Mr Bosworth:** We are seeing small changes. It is still the case that the vast majority of students who leave education at 18 go to university with the traditional A-level subjects, but I think that that has begun to change. As I say, I teach mathematics and science in a college, and the vast majority of science students are not going on to jobs at 18. In fact, of the cohort this year, around 80 per cent went to higher education institutions, including to some pre-1992 institutions, as well as post-1992 institutions. That shows that universities are opening their doors to a broader range of qualifications. I also think that the courses that colleges run for adult learners—ostensibly anybody can join them—that is, the access to science and access to humanities courses that colleges offer, has helped that, because students who cannot do A-levels for a variety of reasons have come in and been successful. So it is now being recognised that younger people, in the 16 to 18-year-old cohort, may also come in with a mixture of qualifications. It is about whether they are successful in those qualifications that the universities are focusing upon. There is the example of the student who went to do geology in Cardiff and got distinctions across the board, which is exceptional and unusual, but he was an exceptional student who had failed in school for a variety of social reasons and had then come back to college and achieved success. So, to answer your question, they are. It is a trickle and a small number, but it is something that we should be encouraging in the FE and school sectors.

[149] **Simon Thomas:** If we hear more about those examples, that might change some people's perception about this mix of vocational and academic courses, might it not?

[150] **Mr Williams:** Yes, I think that you are right. Following on from what Ian said, the committee might want to note that the Secretary of State in England is now undertaking a review of how A-levels are implemented—they are moving from modular back to linear, with end-of-term exams and so on. They are talking about looking at how they formulate A-levels. One thing that has been suggested in England is that they should look at the role that higher education institutions play in the development of A-levels—whether that is about the university saying what exams should look like to suit their courses or suit their demands, I am not sure. However, there have been suggestions in England regarding the role that higher education institutions could play in the formation of future A-levels. That might have a knock-on effect, especially here in Wales, because of the way in which the higher education system is interlinked between the four nations.

[151] **Julie Morgan:** There is obviously a big difference between a 14-year-old and a 16-year-old. What preparation do lecturers get to deal with pastoral care, for example? I know that this is a matter of concern. If there are difficulties and problems with the young people, how much do you refer back to the school where the pupil is registered?

[152] **Christine Chapman:** The previous witnesses also talked about child protection. Could you also comment on that in colleges?

[153] **Mr Williams:** As a result of the pathways, we are now seeing 14 and 15-year-olds moving into further education colleges to study. Currently, the postgraduate certificate of education for further education only trains you to teach students aged 16 and over. Obviously, there are different teaching methods and mechanisms to be applied to the teaching of a 14-year-old. This is now leading to an increased pressure on lecturers in colleges. I have one anecdotal example: I remember a lecturer telling me that he had a group of 14-year-old boys from the local comprehensive doing engineering with him, and he said that that was fine, but the problem was that they were not as mature as their 16-year-old counterparts. There is no reason for that—I was a tearaway when I was 14 and I am not going to apologise for it; you are at that age. However, he said that a lot more of his time was spent supervising, rather than teaching, because of the way that they operate in the classroom. We are seeing that the

lecturers have not had that training and support to be able to change the way that they work and change their practices for working with 14-year-olds. A few years ago, when the Measure was coming out, we were approached by the Welsh Government—the Welsh Assembly Government back then—about developing guidance for FE lecturers on how to work within the learning pathways. We contributed some ideas to that guidance, but we have not seen it since. We have tried looking online for it and it is not there either. So, if that guidance exists, we are asking for it to be published with immediate effect, because that tool could be invaluable to FE lecturers.

[154] **Mr Bosworth:** That is true. The 14 to 16-year-old students whom we have are dealt with quite separately, in a way, because they have education programmes with people who have had some training to deal with 14 to 16-year-olds. However, they then may share some of their educational experience with the older students, so you may have a GCSE mathematics class with 14-year-olds, 16-year-olds and adults in it.

10.45 a.m.

[155] I think that it requires some guidance and training for the people who are delivering in the sector and for the managers who are managing that in the institutions. So, that is a very important point. I have to say that there are not huge numbers of 14-year-olds who choose to go to college, but a small, regular number do, and the management and the lecturers in the colleges need to know how to deal with those sorts of pupils, because there are different legal issues.

[156] **Julie Morgan:** What about the child protection issues that the Chair raised?

[157] **Mr Bosworth:** I have no knowledge of how it is being developed. Unfortunately, my colleague, who should have been here, is ill and he is an expert in that area and would have been able to give you an answer to that.

[158] **Christine Chapman:** I wonder whether you could write to us on that issue, because it is a really important one.

[159] **Mr Bosworth:** We could give you a written answer. I will not use the get-out clause, but I am sitting here on a night's notice, effectively, for our vice-president, Guy Stoot, who is a childcare lecturer and teaches that issue, so he must be aware of how that is being dealt with. I am sure that colleges are complying with the legal aspect of this, because they have no choice but to do so, but whether they are doing it in the most effective way is something that we would like to write to you about and give you a proper—

[160] **Christine Chapman:** We would be grateful if you would.

[161] **Julie Morgan:** It is an important issue, and we need to know.

[162] **Christine Chapman:** I will bring in Jenny now.

[163] **Jenny Rathbone:** To come back to behaviour management, not all schoolteachers are experts on behaviour management and, sometimes, we provide courses on how to improve people's behaviour management. Is it not possible for you to share some of the expertise that exists within local education authorities? Those sorts of training courses could also be delivered for those of you who are teaching 14 to 16-year-olds.

[164] **Mr Bosworth:** That is an interesting suggestion, because one thing that we have not even thought about, at this stage, is sharing continuous professional development between schools and colleges. The fact that schools exist within LEAs and that colleges exist as

incorporated bodies has meant that colleges have operated very much as lone bodies in terms of training their staff. Again, that would certainly be of some benefit. It would be most effective earlier down the line in the PGSE, both in terms of the development of the lecturer and in terms of the cost and the efficiency of delivering it, if college lecturers were trained to know how to deal with 14 to 16-year-olds as well as 16 to 18-year-olds.

[165] **Mr Williams:** To follow on from what Ian said, it is about cost efficiencies and making it easier for the lecturer. In addition, if the lecturer is used to teaching 14-year-olds straight after finishing the course, that can only help to shape the way that they teach and that learning experience—more so than waiting five or six years and then, bang, being sprung with 14-year-olds down the line. As a part of the way that lecturers teach and what they teach, there is an advantage to that as well.

[166] **Christine Chapman:** I am conscious of time. We have another session after this one, which will be held in private, so I ask Members and our witnesses to be as concise as possible. We have some further big issues to come up as well.

[167] **Aled Roberts:** Mae eich tystiolaeth ysgrifenedig yn cydnabod nad yw darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg o fewn colegau addysg bellach yn grêt. A ydych yn gweld hynny'n newid o achos y Mesur? A oes gennych unrhyw awgrymiadau eraill am sut gallwn wella'r sefyllfa?

Aled Roberts: Your written evidence acknowledges that Welsh-medium provision within further education colleges is not great. Do you see that changing because of the Measure? Do you have any other suggestions about how we can improve the situation?

[168] **Mr Williams:** Yr hyn yr ydym yn ei weld o ran darpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg yw, yn draddodiadol, os ydych eisiau gwneud lefel A, yr ydych yn aros yn eich ysgol gyfun. Dyna beth yr oeddwn i a llawer o bobl yr wyf yn eu hadnabod wedi ei wneud. O ran ehangu hynny i mewn i addysg bellach, nid yw'r ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg unman yn agos i le y dylai fod ar gyfer darparu gofynion y Mesur yn llwyddiannus. Mae lefel y ddarpariaeth cyfrwng Cymraeg yn isel iawn o fewn colegau addysg bellach ac mae angen sicrhau ein bod yn gallu ei chodi.

Mr Williams: What we see in terms of Welsh-medium provision is that, traditionally, if you want to study A-levels, you stay in your comprehensive school. That is what I and many people whom I know did. In terms of expanding that into FE, Welsh-medium provision is nowhere near where it should be in order to fulfil the Measure's requirements successfully. The level of Welsh-medium provision within FE colleges is very low and we need to ensure that we can increase that provision.

[169] Sut allwn wneud hynny? Mae digon o ddarlithwyr tu allan sydd yn rhugl yn y Gymraeg. Fel y gallwch weld yn y papur, un enghraifft yw seiri coed yng Ngholeg Sir Gâr. Y broblem yw bod llawer o'r darlithwyr wedi gwneud eu graddau addysg uwch drwy gyfrwng y Saesneg, felly nid oes ganddynt yr eirfa, y derminoleg, na'r hyder i allu dysgu cwrs lefel A neu gwrs galwedigaethol mewn coleg addysg bellach drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Hoffwn weld Llywodraeth Cymru yn gwneud ymrwymiad ariannol, o bosibl drwy sefydlu corff tebyg i'r Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. Yr ydym yn ffyddiog bod y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol yn mynd i gynyddu'r ddarpariaeth, a chynyddu'r

How do we do that? There are plenty of lecturers out there who are fluent Welsh speakers. As you can see in the paper, there is one example in terms of carpentry in Carmarthenshire College. The problem is that many of those lecturers will have done their higher education degrees through the medium of English, so they do not have the vocabulary, the terminology, or the confidence to teach A-level courses or vocational courses in a further education college through the medium of Welsh. I would like to see the Welsh Government make a financial commitment, and possibly establish a body similar to the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol. We are confident that

ddarpariaeth o ran staff, drwy gydol addysg uwch. Yn awr, mae gennym gyfle i ehangu hynny i addysg bellach a'r sector 14-19, er mwyn sicrhau bod gennym staff sy'n rhugl yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg i allu dysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, ac yn ddwyieithog os oes galw am hynny.

[170] Mae angen gweithredu ar hyn yn awr, yn hytrach nac yn hwyrach. Mae'r galw ar gyfer addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg yn codi yn syfrdanol, flwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn. Ble fyddwn ni ymhen 15 mlynedd? Os yw'r patrymau'n parhau fel y maent, bydd y galw yn uwch eto. Mae angen sicrhau nad ydym yn anfon neges i blant sy'n dod o deuluoedd Saesneg eu hiaith nad oes modd gwneud cwrs drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg ar ôl cyrraedd 16 mlwydd oed am nad yw'n cael ei gynnig gan golegau addysg bellach. Maent yn cael y neges nad oes modd iddynt gael addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg ar ôl cyrraedd 16 mlwydd oed. Nid yw hynny'n wir. Mae angen sicrhau bod neges yn cael ei chyfleu i fyfyrwyr eu bod yn gallu gwneud cyrsiau drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.

[171] **Simon Thomas:** Yn ôl yr hyn a ddeallaf, mae lefel y dysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg mewn colegau addysg bellach mor isel â 2 y cant. Yn amlwg, nid yw hynny'n addas ar gyfer y lefel o dwf mewn galw sy'n debygol yn y dyfodol, ac yn bresennol. Yn ogystal â dysgu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg, a oes unrhyw gamau i gynyddu ymwybyddiaeth y gallai colegau eu cymryd o ran yr angen i greu ethos mwy Cymraeg? Wrth edrych yn ôl 20 mlynedd, mae newid syfrdanol wedi bod yn y sector addysg uwch yng Nghymru. Mae popeth yn ddwyieithog ac mae hynny i'w weld yn y sefydliadau, lle mae croeso i ddefnyddio'r Gymraeg ar hyd coridorau'r sefydliadau, er enghraifft. Pan fyddaf yn ymweld â cholegau, nid wyf yn cael yr un argraff.

[172] **Mr Williams:** Cytunaf â chi ar hynny. Mae strategaeth addysg cyfrwng Cymraeg Llywodraeth Cymru yn cymryd y camau hynny, ac mae'n rhaid croesawu hynny fel cam ymlaen. Yr ydym yn croesawu'r cynllun ei hun fel cam ymlaen. Mae yna hefyd gynllun gan Colegau Cymru—y corff sy'n cynrychioli colegau addysg

the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol will increase provision, and staff provision, in higher education. We have an opportunity to extend that to further education and the 14-19 sector, so that we have staff who are fluent in Welsh and English who can teach through the medium of Welsh, and bilingually if there is a call for that.

We need to act on this sooner rather than later. Demand for Welsh-medium education is increasing at a substantial rate year on year. Where will we be in 15 years' time? If the trends continue as they are, the demand will be even higher. We need to ensure that we do not send the message to children from non-Welsh-speaking families that once they reach the age of 16 they cannot do courses through the medium of Welsh because they are not provided by further education colleges. They are getting the message that they cannot access Welsh-medium education after they reach 16 years of age. That is not true. We must ensure that the message is conveyed to students that they can study through the medium of Welsh.

Simon Thomas: From what I understand, the level of teaching through the medium of Welsh is as low as 2 per cent in further education colleges. Obviously, that is not appropriate for the increase in the level of demand in future, or at present. As well as teaching through the medium of Welsh, are there any other steps that could be taken to raise awareness in colleges of the need to create a more Welsh ethos? Looking back 20 years, there has been massive change in the higher education sector in Wales. Everything is bilingual and that can be seen in the institutions, where people are welcome to use Welsh in the corridors of those institutions, as it were. When I go to colleges, I do not get the same impression.

Mr Williams: I agree with you on that. The Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy is taking those steps, and it is to be welcomed as a step forward. We welcome the scheme itself as a step forward. There is also a CollegesWales scheme—the body that represents further education colleges in Wales—that encourages, as part

bellach Cymru—sy'n annog, fel rhan o'r strategaeth, mwy o naws Cymraeg mewn colegau, drwy bethau fel arwyddion dwyieithog ac ati. Mae'r camau hynny yn cael eu cymryd, ond o ran pa mor bell maent yn cael eu gweithredu, nid wyf yn siŵr. Ond, yn sicr y mae'n gam ymlaen. Os ydych am siarad Cymraeg neu ddysgu Cymraeg, mae cael naws Cymraeg yn ei gwneud hi'n llawer haws.

of that strategy, more of a Welsh ethos within colleges, through things such as bilingual signage and so on. Those steps are being taken, but with regard to how far they are being implemented, I am not sure. However, it certainly is a step forward. If you want to speak Welsh or learn Welsh, then having a Welsh ethos makes it much easier.

[173] **Simon Thomas:** Ar adegau, mae gan Tesco ethos fwy Cymraeg na rhai colegau addysg bellach, ac mae angen newid hynny. [*Chwerthin.*]

Simon Thomas: At times, Tesco has a greater Welsh ethos than certain further education colleges, and that needs to change. [*Laughter.*]

[174] **Jenny Rathbone:** The undoubted challenges around transport in future will be in terms of finance and the time that pupils are travelling. Do you have any evidence of young people dropping out because of transport and time issues?

[175] **Mr Bosworth:** I only have anecdotal evidence. We have students who chose one course then changed to a centrally based course in the college, so they may have done. We have some students who only did the first year of an A-level course, who were travelling from school to school. However, that may not be the main reason why they changed to a different course, it may be that they were not successful on that programme, or they decided that they wanted to do something more vocational and came to college. Anecdotally, students are not happy to travel. Within a week, they may have to travel across three sites. It is more desirable that the transportation of students is kept to a minimum. It may be inevitable in some areas, as we have problems in Wales with the size of the nation and the distribution of the population. However, addressing that issue could be done a lot better.

[176] **Jenny Rathbone:** One of the organisations that gave evidence earlier, said in its written statement that, in some cases, students could not get back from a course because the buses did not run that late. That is an issue that needs to be addressed with the transport providers, but have you decided to run some sort of temporary accommodation provision in any cases?

[177] **Mr Bosworth:** To my knowledge, that does not take place in the FE sector. It is really just concerned with the provision of HE. It is an interesting suggestion, but I would have thought that there would have to be a demand for that. So, if there was demand for that, colleges should think, 'Why not?'. Colleges and schools should think about every option. Real collaboration would mean running courses in specialist centres or running a wider variety of courses on a larger site if possible. However, that is not always possible, but that is the best way that collaboration could work for the students. It is about the quality of experience for the learner. That is the key.

[178] **Mr Williams:** It possibly raises questions around joint timetabling as well. Colleges often run weekly timetables, but I know that a lot of schools run two-week timetables. There needs to be that synergy between timetabling, and that needs to be raised with regard to the transport issue.

[179] **Mr Bosworth:** On the issue of timetabling and working collaboratively, in Wales, unlike in England, we have a national pay scale for lecturers that is the same scale for schoolteachers, so it makes collaborative work much easier. We are currently working on negotiations with employers on a national contract, which would not be the same as for

schoolteachers, but it would eliminate the 22 or 23 contracts that exist, which makes it much more difficult to work together. So, if you have a single contract for lecturers and a single contract for teachers, then, with regard to sharing staff, that would make collaboration much easier to do in Wales and could work effectively.

[180] That would also address some of the concerns in the schools sector, because schools perceive that colleges want to take over provision, rather than share it, while the colleges perceive that students are being encouraged to stay on in school. That is not a healthy situation, but that is the market. So, if we want to eliminate that, we need to seek genuine collaboration, whereby the students do not travel, but the staff travel. There would need to be sensitivity around that, from the teachers' point of view, because quality of education means maintaining the level of expertise in the sector and a reasonable workload. Our union is certainly active in campaigning for that. However, it is not just about the conditions in which we are working, but also about maintaining the quality of education for the learner.

[181] So, there are issues for us as a trade union with regard to travelling, but they can be addressed. Certainly, the sharing of staff is one way of smoothing over those rough edges between schools and colleges that currently exist.

[182] **Christine Chapman:** I am going to have to draw this session to a close now. I know that there are a few other questions that Members wanted to put to you, so, if you are happy, we will write to you so that you can respond. I remind Members that if there is anything else that you want our witnesses to respond to, please let the clerks know.

[183] I thank you both for attending this morning; we are grateful to you. We have had an interesting session that will help our inquiry. We will send you a transcript of the meeting so that you can check for factual accuracy. Many thanks again for attending.

[184] Before I close the meeting, I want to remind Members that the next meeting will take place next week, on Wednesday, 23 November. We will be continuing our evidence taking for our inquiry into the implementation of the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009.

*Daeth y cyfarfod i ben am 10.59 a.m.
The meeting ended at 10.59 a.m.*