



Evaluation of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG Partnership



Research

Research document No: 045/2009

Date of issue: September 2009

Evaluation of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG Partnership

Audience	National and local bodies in Wales concerned with education, training and skills in Wales.
Overview	This report outlines the key findings, performance and impact emerging from the evaluation of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership.
Action required	None - for information.
Further information	Julie Owens Senior Research Analyst Research and Evaluation Branch Knowledge Management Division DCELLS Welsh Assembly Government Unit 6 St. Asaph Business Park St. Asaph Denbighshire LL17 0LJ Tel: 01745 538540 Fax: 01745 538501 E-mail: research2@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Additional copies	Can be obtained by visiting the Welsh Assembly Government website http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills
Related documents	None

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION TO THE EVALUATION	2
1.1	Purpose of the report	2
1.2	Scope and objectives of the evaluation	2
1.3	Overview of methodology.....	3
1.4	Acknowledgements	4
1.5	Background to the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership.....	4
1.6	The existing contract.....	6
2	BILINGUALISM TRAINING IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES	8
2.1	Three-day methodology training.....	8
2.2	Methodology training sessions as part of the National Sabbaticals Scheme	12
2.3	Provide mentoring support staff	14
2.4	Support for the development of teaching and learning standards by LLUK.....	17
2.5	Provide training and good practice sessions for staff.....	17
3	TRAINING TO DEVELOP BILINGUALISM IN WORK-BASED LEARNING	20
3.1	Introduction and overview.....	20
3.2	Challenges faced.....	20
3.3	Conclusions	22
4	ACCREDITATION AND PROMOTION OF THE IAITH AR WAITH UNITS	23
4.1	Background	23
4.2	Meeting learner needs.....	23
4.3	Response from colleges	24
4.4	Conclusions	24
5	SUPPORT IN IDENTIFYING WELSH-MEDIUM AND BILINGUAL RESOURCE NEEDS AND NETWORKING.....	26
5.1	Background and contractual obligations	26
5.2	Revised approach	27
6	CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	29
6.1	Diversity of roles and functions.....	29
6.2	Summary of performance against intended outputs	29
6.3	Strengths and weaknesses of the ‘Sgiliaith model’	33
6.4	Balance of the partnership.....	35
6.5	Additional unintended effects of the partnership.....	35
6.6	Recommendations.....	36

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE EVALUATION

1.1 Purpose of the report

1.1.1 Arad Consulting was commissioned by the Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills of the Welsh Assembly Government in December 2008 to carry out an evaluation of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership. This report outlines the key findings to emerge during the evaluation, drawing on the research and fieldwork carried out by the evaluation team. It considers the performance and impact of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership in relation to the objectives included in the contract held between the Welsh Assembly Government and the partnership.

1.2 Scope and objectives of the evaluation

1.2.1 Following an inception meeting between the Arad team and the Client in December 2008, it was agreed that the evaluation should not duplicate other related research and evaluation studies but should concentrate on identifying the contribution of the partnership's activities to relevant programmes and initiatives. It was decided that the key questions to be examined during the evaluation would be:

1.2.2 The overall aim of this evaluation was defined as being:

- To assess the impact and effectiveness of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership in increasing the capacity to deliver Welsh-medium and bilingual learning opportunities.

1.2.3 The specific objectives to be addressed were:

- To what extent has the partnership delivered the intended outputs listed in the contract between the Welsh Assembly Government and Sgiliaith/CYDAG?

- How is the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership contributing to the strategic objectives of key initiatives linked to a) bilingualism training; b) work-based learning; c) promotion of Iaith ar Waith; d) resource development?
- What contribution has the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership made towards long-term capacity building in the sector?
- What are the key strengths of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership?
- Are there any other areas of bilingual development where the partnership could contribute?
- Allocation of funding: how is the funding attached to the contract allocated?

1.3 Overview of methodology

1.3.1 Following the guidelines in the original invitation to tender and the subsequent project inception meeting the methodology for undertaking the evaluation was based on a combination of desk research and fieldwork which included the following key tasks:

- i. Review of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership's internal systems and documentation, including analysis of monitoring data collected from participants on various training programmes.
- ii. Interviews with individuals who have participated in each of the four elements of the partnership's work programme.
- iii. Supplementary primary evidence collection from participants through questionnaires.
- iv. Interviews with programme staff (including Sgiliaith/CYDAG staff, Welsh Assembly Government officials, Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, Canolfan Bedwyr).
- v. Interviews with partner organisations and participants' employers (including schools, colleges, WBL providers).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 We would like to note our thanks to all those who contributed their time and effort to this evaluation of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership. All contributions – both written submissions and contributions during interviews with the evaluation team – were greatly appreciated and provided the team with a substantial body of evidence and information upon which to base this report and its findings.

1.5 Background to the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership

- 1.5.1 Canolfan Sgiliaith is a department within Coleg Meirion Dwyfor and its primary objective is to carry out project work to promote bilingualism and Welsh-medium education in vocational post-16 education in Wales. Sgiliaith defines its own objective as an organisation as being

‘to offer practical advice on good practice, staff training, and resources, with the aim of enhancing students’ bilingual skills and experiences.’

- 1.5.2 CYDAG (Association of Schools for Welsh Language) works with primary and secondary schools to promote and develop all aspects of bilingual education. It does so by promoting collaboration, by arranging activities to support professional development, serving as a forum for discussion and dialogue regarding bilingual education and by communicating the aspirations and concerns of its members to the relevant public organisations and authorities.
- 1.5.3 The Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership provides a service for schools, FEIs and private training providers thus ensuring coverage for the whole Welsh-medium and bilingual sector.
- 1.5.4 Collectively, the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership (also referred to as ‘the partnership’ in this report) was developed to maintain a central support service for the post-16 sector in the development of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision. This central service covers the whole of Wales and provides support for post-16 provision with regard to training and mentoring in schools, colleges and work-based learning to develop bilingualism, accreditation and promotion of a generic vocational

qualification to recognise learners’ bilingual skills, in addition to providing support in identifying Welsh-medium resource needs and networking.

1.5.5 The partnership’s current structure and remit have taken shape over time, building on successive phases of activity. Table 1, below, summarises the various stages in the inception and subsequent evolution of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership.

Table 1: Evolution of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership

1997-2001	<p>Allweddiaith Project</p> <p>Managed by Coleg Meirion Dwyfor and funded by the Welsh Language Board. Supported development in the six colleges with the greatest levels of bilingual provision.</p>
2001	<p>Canolfan Sgiliaith established</p> <p>Funded by <i>fforwm</i>, ELWa and the Welsh Language Board, Sgiliaith was formally established within Coleg Meirion Dwyfor to promote post -16 bilingual education, building on the work of the Allweddiaith project. Sgiliaith reported to the Fforwm Board.</p>
2003- 2005	<p>Sgiliaith’s activity funded by the Learning Challenge Fund</p> <p>The Learning Challenge Fund (LCF) was established to address the barriers to increasing bilingual provision in the post-16 sector, barriers identified by ELWa as being linked to infrastructure, capacity and resources.</p> <p>This determined the four strands of activity that Sgiliaith was remitted to deliver: i) support resource panels; ii) development work with colleges (advice and guidance); iii) work on NVQs; iv) training in colleges and schools. Activity during this period sought to provide support to colleges and schools across Wales.</p> <p>CYDAG were involved as partners under the LCF as members of the Steering Group, which also included <i>Fforwm</i>, Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor and ELWa.</p>
2005-2007	<p>Partneriaith Sgiliaith/CYDAG Partnership</p> <p>Under a contract between DCELLS and Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, the</p>

	Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership was tasked with providing a central Wales-wide support service that included training and networking, identifying resource needs, supporting bilingual assessment at NVQ level and sharing cross-sector good practice. The formal partnership with CYDAG enabled additional support to be provided to teachers in relation to curriculum developments such as the Welsh Bac and 14-19 Learning Pathways.
2007-2009	Partneriaeth Sgiliaith/CYDAG Partnership The existing contract and the focus of this evaluation. (see section 1.3 below)

1.6 The existing contract

1.6.1 As illustrated above, the current work of the partnership has built upon, and developed further, earlier activity led by the Welsh Language Board and *Fforwm*. The partnership's obligations were set out in detail in the contract administered by the Welsh Language Development Unit within DCELLS.

1.6.2 Between September 2007 and August 2009, Sgiliaith/CYDAG was contracted to deliver the following:

- Appoint 1 full-time officer or equivalent to support the existing director with the implementation of the projects outputs.

Bilingualism training in schools and colleges

- Provide 3-day methodology training for 60 staff over 2 academic years by July 2009.
- Provide support for the development of new teaching and learning standards by LLUK.
- Provide support to Canolfan Bedwyr in methodology training sessions on the National Sabbaticals Scheme.
- Provide mentoring for 12 staff over 1 academic year (2008-09); and
- provide training and good practice sessions for staff.

Training to develop bilingualism in work-based learning

- Pilot a centre-based structure within which candidates' bilingualism can be developed by work-based providers.

Accreditation and promotion of the Iaith ar Waith units

- Market the Iaith ar Waith units and establish cohorts of students to undertake them.
- Develop and accredit a new Level 3 units including support materials.
- Provide support and training from tutors teaching and assessing the units.
- Seek an awarding body to formalise the accreditation of the units.
- Develop, accredit and pilot equivalent units for second language students.

Support in identifying Welsh-medium and bilingual resource needs and networking

- Select members for the new resource panels (subject-specific panels involving practitioners from colleges and schools convened by Sgiliaith to discuss needs, priorities and opportunities in bilingual resource development).
- Produce individual reports for each priority area following the subject panels.
- Training provided in the use of Rhannu facilities for 50 providers (the Rhannu project was established with the aim of enabling teachers and lecturers of post-16 courses to share bilingual and Welsh medium resources in vocational subjects. It is funded by the Welsh Assembly Government and hosted through the National Grid for Learning Wales).
- Ensure additional material will be available on the Rhannu website.

1.6.3 Payment for the services and activities listed above took place over three financial years and was broken down as follows:

Financial year ending	£
31 March 2008	69,281
31 March 2009	143,834
31 March 2010	60,377
TOTAL	273,492

2 BILINGUALISM TRAINING IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

2.1 Three-day methodology training

2.1.1 The three day methodology training offers school teachers and college tutors who are already confident with the Welsh language, the opportunity to develop bilingual teaching techniques.

Delivery

2.1.2 The training is typically delivered over a period of two consecutive days during the first week, followed by another training day the following week. During the three day course participants are offered presentations on how to deliver lessons bilingually and are supported in developing bilingual teaching materials.

Participants are also required to present a lesson bilingually to the training providers who then assess the delivery of the session, offer verbal feedback on the day as well as more detailed written feedback at a later stage.

2.1.3 Primary evidence collected through interviews with those who have received the training was very positive and examples were gathered of lessons now being successfully delivered bilingually as a direct consequence of the training that they received.

'I'll be using the information from the course to prepare materials to circulate to my students.'

3 day methodology training participant 2008

2.1.4 Those consulted who had taken part in the 3-day methodology training offered very positive feedback relating to the quality of the training as well as its relevance to their bilingual teaching needs. All attendees consulted during the fieldwork agreed that the training was clearly and professionally delivered. Feedback and guidance provided to attendees during the training was also considered to be beneficial and constructive.

- 2.1.5 Monitoring forms, collected by the partnership following training, included similarly positive comments and feedback. Views expressed noted that the focus on the practical application of skills through the micro-teaching sessions that participants are required to deliver at the end of the training were of particular value.
- 2.1.6 While the majority of responses were positive there were some minor concerns expressed. For example one of the training participants noted that less time could have been devoted to developing bilingual materials on the second day of the training in order to place more emphasis on practical exercises relating to delivery techniques. Others were of the opinion that three days was not enough time to cover all the points required.
- 2.1.7 These points reflect the differing and diverse needs of practitioners who participate in the training as opposed to the overall quality and structure of the training delivery. Indeed many of those consulted noted that the training was sufficiently tailored to enable them to develop bilingual lesson plans that met their specific teaching needs. As such, the majority asserted that they were in a position to apply the training they received with immediate effect following the three day course.
- 2.1.8 Examples have been offered during the course of this evaluation of bilingual teaching methods being incorporated into lesson plans as a direct consequence of the training delivered by Sgiliaith. In one school the need for new bilingual provision had been introduced as part of their policy to combine lessons and teaching resources in some subject areas with neighbouring institutions. This prompted the school to participate in the three day training and the outcome has been the delivery of bilingual lessons in the key subject areas identified. These lessons have been positively received by students and it was reported that students requested the reintroduction of bilingual lessons following a brief period when they reverted to being delivered in English only.
- 2.1.9 Some of those consulted expressed disappointment that there was no continuation of assessment and support for teachers following the three days of training. It was felt by these consultees that a short, possibly one-day, follow up or refresher course during the first 12 months following the training would be of

great benefit. This, it was considered, would not only offer the opportunity to refresh skills but also re-enthuse some individuals who may not yet have taken or found opportunities to introduce bilingual teaching in their school or college.

2.1.10 A continuation of assessment would also offer further reassurances to those who have put the training into practice that their delivery of bilingual teaching continues to be of a high standard. Nevertheless the anecdotal evidence collected during the course of this evaluation suggests that the three-day methodology training is having a positive impact on the provision of bilingual teaching in schools and colleges.

2.1.11 The extent of the impact generated is however, also dependent on factors which are outside the control of Sgiliaith. These include whether the most appropriate teaching staff from individual institutions participate in the training. This is based on decisions undertaken by senior managers within individual schools and colleges which in turn will be influenced by the enthusiasm and desire at this level to include bilingual learning within the wider teaching practices of the institution in question.

2.1.12 One individual consulted was of the opinion that although the three day methodology training worked well and was generating a positive impact that the process was only scratching the surface as most of the resources accompanying the teaching was only available in English. These examples serve to demonstrate the challenging environment within which Sgiliaith operates.

Marketing

2.1.13 The three-day methodology training has been promoted more widely during the course of the contract period. Marketing was initially based around the circulation of advertising flyers targeted only towards colleges; but more recently Sgiliaith has been invited into schools and colleges who are keen to learn more about the training.

2.1.14 CYDAG, through its network of associate schools, has also played an important role in marketing the training more broadly and in arranging sessions in schools. One school visited noted that they became aware of the training through a conference event organised by CYDAG. However, this was during June 2008 and

therefore the training could not take place during that academic year and had to be postponed until September 2009. This emphasises the need to provide sufficient lead-in time to enable institutions to plan for the training to take place.

- 2.1.15 The success of the marketing to date is evident by the fact that the three day methodology training has already been delivered to schools and colleges in Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Powys, Gwynedd and Ceredigion. Understanding which aspects of the marketing strategy work particularly well will be an important factor that will help guide the direction of future marketing plans. In order to develop this understanding Sgiliaith should consider collecting feedback information from three-day methodology training participants and their senior managers to review how they originally became aware of the training opportunity.

Issues for future consideration

- 2.1.16 The three day methodology training is based primarily around the expertise of a few individuals. While this expertise is based on vast knowledge and experience some concerns have been raised during this evaluation that the breadth of this experience may be limited. Even though no concern about the quality of the delivery and content of the training has been expressed it has been noted by a few that the training process has not been challenged or researched further by a wider field of academic expertise. As such opportunities to confirm or refine current practices have not been pursued.
- 2.1.17 There may be a need for further research therefore into developing stronger links with higher education institutions to develop a sounding board whereby Sgiliaith can test some of their current training practices against, and link into good practice developed by bilingual experts in HEIs.
- 2.1.18 It has been suggested that, as 14-19 local curricula are finalised and put into effect, there is likely to be an increase in the scale of bilingual provision planned and delivered. The demand for practitioners who are skilled in delivering bilingually may well increase correspondingly and the 3-day course developed by Sgiliaith provides a proven model that could be delivered more widely. The potential role that Sgiliaith could play in advising local networks and contributing

to the implementation of the 14-19 agenda has been raised by a number of strategic-level consultees.

2.1.19 In addition the 14 – 19 networks offer an opportunity for Sgiliaith to promote the training opportunities it provides. However, if the level of success in marketing and increases in demand for the three day methodology training continues, then the capacity of Sgiliaith to meet this demand will need to be taken into consideration.

2.2 Methodology training sessions as part of the National Sabbaticals Scheme

Impact of Sgiliaith methodology training

- 2.2.1 Sgiliaith plays what has been described as a ‘supporting role’ in the National Sabbaticals Scheme, providing a number of sessions on bilingual teaching methods and practices to support the language training delivered by the University of Wales, Bangor and Cardiff University. The methodological training led by Sgiliaith provides, in the view of programme managers, an important and complementary strand of activity that adds value to the scheme.
- 2.2.2 Evidence collected from a range of contributors – at a strategic level, from delivery partners and from individuals who have completed the Sabbaticals Scheme – underlines this. Sgiliaith’s contribution brings to the scheme a practical focus, which encourages practitioners to consider how they would apply their new language skills in the classroom. The training aims to raise participants’ confidence in using Welsh-medium and bilingual methodologies and is considered a core part of the programme.

‘The training delivered by Sgiliaith – notably the micro-teaching session – was an essential part of the Scheme – it brought about open and helpful discussions about bilingual teaching methods’.

Sabbatical Scheme participant

‘I am a maths teacher but the discussions took into account approaches to bilingual teaching across a wide range of subject areas. This was extremely

valuable and caused us to reflect on teaching methods in different contexts and settings.'

Former Sabbaticals Scheme participant

- 2.2.3 Having the opportunity to develop bilingual lessons that would be used in a real teaching environment was considered to be of particular value. It was also noted by former Sabbaticals Scheme participants that the feedback received directly from Sgiliaith was 'supportive and constructive', enabling those attending the course to develop teaching materials and approaches 'that could be applied in real situations'.

'Sgiliaith's contribution delivered what I needed most from the Sabbaticals Scheme – it helped boost my confidence and self-belief to be able to teach through the medium of Welsh. I now teach bilingually to classes that include pupils from two Welsh-medium schools.'

Former Sabbaticals Scheme participant.

- 2.2.4 Other participants noted that the training provided by Sgiliaith enabled them to manage bilingual classroom environments effectively. In some cases, Sgiliaith have arranged further training sessions with former Sabbaticals Scheme participants.

- 2.2.5 Based on evidence submitted during this evaluation it is clear that Sgiliaith's trainers are held in high esteem and their experience is valued. This experience helps reassure participants and provides them with confidence that the materials and approaches they develop during the scheme will be of a high quality.

'Given the nature of the trainers involved, I was reassured that the methods I would be using would be looked favourably upon by senior managers within the college – and by Estyn.'

Scheme participant.

- 2.2.6 Indeed, the support of senior managers was highlighted as a key factor in the promotion of bilingual learning opportunities post-16. This links to the broader outcomes of the programme and Sgiliaith's contribution.

Outcomes

- 2.2.7 Isolating the contribution of Sgiliaith to the broader impacts and outcomes of the National Sabbaticals Scheme is problematic: Sgiliaith contributes an important, though admittedly limited, part of the overall training provided: while the methodology training prepares participants well in terms of their ability to deliver bilingual learning provision, there are numerous other factors that determine whether or not participants do eventually deliver bilingual learning following the programme. These factors range from learner demand, availability of bilingual teaching resources, the ethos of an institution and level of commitment among senior management to introduce new or additional bilingual provision. The Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership is unable to influence these issues significantly.
- 2.2.8 Therefore while it is possible to conclude that Sgiliaith's training has a positive and beneficial impact on participants – and on their ability to deliver bilingual learning by the end of the programme – it is difficult to draw conclusions on the impact of the methodology component on the wider outcomes in terms post-scheme learning provision, given that a multitude of other factors dictate such outcomes.

Marketing

- 2.2.9 One other aspect of the Sabbaticals Scheme that has been raised by a number of contributors to the evaluation is marketing and promotion. Once again, the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership does not, under the terms of its contract with the Welsh Assembly Government, have a formal role in terms of marketing the Sabbaticals Scheme or recruiting participants (unlike with the 3-day methodology training). Both Sgiliaith and CYDAG are however, by virtue of their regular networking with colleges and schools, in a position to identify potential candidates and play a role in raising awareness of the scheme. This represents added value, as both partners also through their networks communicate the opportunities and benefits afforded by the National Sabbaticals Scheme.

2.3 Provide mentoring support staff

- 2.3.1 The requirements in relation to this element of the partnership's work involved delivering mentoring support during 2008/09. The original intention was to develop a broad-based mentoring programme, in partnership with the Bilingual

Mentoring Working Group. These plans were later amended to focus the mentoring support towards teaching staff who had participated in the sabbatical scheme to enable them to put into practice what they had learned during the training. The mentoring was also postponed until further information could be gained from Sabbatical Scheme participants relating to their progress following the training and therefore their mentoring needs.

2.3.2 One further education college, however, had already earmarked time and resources to pilot the original mentoring scheme. As such it was agreed that a short mentoring support programme would go ahead at the college as a stand-alone pilot. The mentoring pilot took place over a three month period between January and March 2009. As part of the preparatory and planning process the college identified a mentor from within their teaching staff who they considered to be particularly well suited based on her previous experience of delivering PGCE training and undertaking assessment work which she had conducted on behalf of Estyn.

2.3.3 The nominated mentor drew up a work programme based on the 36 hours of support that Sgiliaith had agreed to fund. Upon review of the planned activities Sgiliaith suggested that the level of support required would probably need to increase to 45 hours. The college representatives consulted noted that they appreciated the flexibility of Sgiliaith's approach which enabled them to tailor support according to need.

2.3.4 Tutors to be mentored were also carefully chosen based around the following criteria:

- The enthusiasm of the tutors to deliver bilingual teaching.
- The suitability of the subject area for the delivery of bilingual teaching; and
- the language profile of the students within the group being taught (i.e. whether there was a sufficient mix of Welsh and English speaking students).

2.3.5 The mentor worked closely with the college's Welsh Language Officer throughout the process who offered considerable support in producing bilingual materials including a booklet of terms used in the specific subject areas of the tutors being

mentored. The college was of the opinion that the combination of the mentoring and assessment experience of the mentor and the Welsh language support of the Welsh Language Officer were key success factors for the pilot.

- 2.3.6 Tutors who had been mentored were very positive in relation to the outcomes achieved and the confidence they had developed to deliver more bilingual learning. One tutor claimed that not only had the Welsh language students gained more confidence in using Welsh during classes but non Welsh speakers had demonstrated an interest in Welsh terms which they would not have become familiar with outside of a bilingual learning environment.
- 2.3.7 Wider impacts beyond the learning outcomes of the students taking part directly in the bilingual lessons were also reported. For example, the Welsh Language Officer at the college claimed that the profile of the Welsh language across the college had increased as a direct result of the mentoring programme, albeit from a relatively low base. This increased profile has also created a ripple effect to a number of other areas in a relatively short period of time, including interest expressed by other teaching staff in incorporating bilingual teaching within their subject area.
- 2.3.8 The impacts of the mentoring also appear at this early stage to be sustainable with the tutors themselves claiming that they intend to continue to deliver their teaching bilingually wherever it is appropriate i.e. whenever the student group included Welsh speaking and non-Welsh speaking students.
- 2.3.9 Overall therefore the mentoring was considered to have been a success. There was however a general opinion that a mentoring period of three months was not sufficient to offer tutors all the support and mentoring they needed to develop bilingual teaching techniques and gain sufficient confidence in putting them into practice.
- 2.3.10 It was also noted that while the funding support offered covered most of the time costs of the tutor it did not cover other resource costs incurred including the time and input of the Welsh language Officer. It was considered that the input of the Welsh language Officer had been essential and as such the mentoring programme should reflect this.

2.3.11 The mentor and the Welsh Language Officer were also of the opinion that the reporting and bureaucratic requirements of the contractual arrangements were very reasonable and no more than was expected.

2.3.12 It would appear therefore that the mentoring pilot has been a success and offers a delivery framework that can be delivered elsewhere as long as the experience of the mentor is suitable and that sufficient support is available from the Welsh language officer.

2.4 Support for the development of teaching and learning standards by LLUK

2.4.1 During the course of the contract period, Sgiliaith worked with LLUK to develop professional standards for tutors of Welsh for Adults and standards for bilingual and Welsh medium teaching. In doing so, Sgiliaith tapped into existing networks, working with the Welsh for Adults Centre in Cardiff to ensure practitioners' input into the development of the standards.

2.4.2 The links with LLUK enabled Sgiliaith to make a wider contribution: a member of Sgiliaith's staff also contributed to the guidance for teachers who develop learners' skills in literacy and communication (English and/or Welsh) in the lifelong learning sector in Wales.

2.5 Provide training and good practice sessions for staff

2.5.1 This strand of the partnership's work has produced a number of important developments and outcomes. Firstly, the partnership delivered customised training that linked with key policy developments. Sessions delivered by Sgiliaith and CYDAG on the implications for bilingual provision of the skills agenda and the 14-19 policy proved popular and exceeded targets.

'The session provided a good overview of the new skills-based curriculum and opportunities within the new framework to promote bilingualism.'

'An excellent opportunity to exchange ideas with other teachers; very timely and

linked to current policy developments.'

Practitioners who attended Sgiliaith/CYDAG Skills Agenda Training
(Aberystwyth, 2008)

- 2.5.2 While some training was designed to respond to key policy developments, other activities and good practice sessions were arranged by CYDAG in response to specific needs identified by its affiliated schools. These included a session on CACHE and social care courses; another was based on sharing good practice in the delivery of the Welsh Bac. These courses were considered valuable and informative by those who attended. Sgiliaith and CYDAG collect feedback from participants, which feeds into the design and delivery of subsequent courses. This is good practice on the part of the partnership, ensuring that the services provided are subject to practitioner scrutiny, which helps maintain the quality and relevance of training. In previous sessions, for example, practitioners have noted that courses could have focused more on how to apply some of the new policy / curriculum developments in the classroom.
- 2.5.3 Sgiliaith has led a number of activities aimed at developing video-conferencing as a means of promoting collaboration in the delivery of bilingual and Welsh-medium provision post-16. This is an increasingly important area of work in facilitating resource sharing in bilingual provision, which also has the potential for wider use as local 14-19 curricula are rolled out over the coming years.
- 2.5.4 As schools and colleges are encouraged by their local 14-19 networks to work more closely together to deliver their local area curricula the effective deployment of bilingual capacity among practitioners is likely to become an increasingly important issue. Some of the challenges facing networks are likely to revolve around identifying efficient models for providing enhanced options for learners, while also ensuring that this includes bilingual and/or Welsh-medium provision. In some subject areas, vocational subjects in particular, there are shortages of suitably qualified bilingual staff and it will be important that, where such capacity exists, it is used efficiently. In some cases, this may involve sharing resources across local network boundaries and adopting a regional approach to planning and delivering bilingual provision. Video-conferencing provides opportunities to this end, and the experience of Sgiliaith and CYDAG in working

with practitioners using such methods offers lessons that networks could apply as they plan the delivery of bilingual provision.

Conclusion

2.5.5 In relation to the provision of bilingualism training to schools and colleges, the principal strand of the partnership's work programme under its contract with the Welsh Assembly Government, the evaluation has found that key targets have been met and that practitioners value very highly the suite of training programmes delivered.

3 TRAINING TO DEVELOP BILINGUALISM IN WORK-BASED LEARNING

3.1 Introduction and overview

3.1.1 This area of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership's work has presented the greatest challenges and, by common agreement, has witnessed least progress in relation to the objectives set out in the contract. The original aim of piloting a centre-based approach to developing bilingual work-based learning provision has not been realised. Discussions with Sgiliaith staff, work-based learning providers, learners and the Welsh Assembly Government have made clear, however, that there has been no shortage of activity in this area during the contract period, nor of effort on the part of the partnership to move forward the agenda. However numerous barriers remain, which go beyond the partnership's immediate sphere of influence and which have restricted progress.

3.1.2 There has been regular discussion of the issues and barriers faced in relation to WBL between the Assembly as Client and sponsor and Sgiliaith/CYDAG as the contractor.

3.2 Challenges faced

3.2.1 Acknowledging the difficulties faced a member of staff at Sgiliaith presented a paper in October 2008 that assess progress to date and summarised the key issues that have hindered progress. They include:

- An overall lack of bilingual language skills among assessors.
- A lack of resources available and a lack of capacity to develop new resources (although Sgiliaith have contributed to the development of new bilingual WBL resources including questionnaires and assessment materials for use by WBL assessors in equality and diversity, sustainability, health and safety and numeracy).
- Reluctance on the part of awarding bodies to make vocational standards available bilingually (e.g. Sgiliaith encountered problems during its work in the field of customer service with NVQ standards not available through OCR exam board).

- Insufficient demand for bilingual WBL provision from learners and from employers.
- 3.2.2 In terms of the evolution needed to address these issues, it has been argued that a culture change within workplace assessment is required, along with greater incentives presented to work-based learning providers to work bilingually. The contribution that an organisation such as Sgiliaith can make in relation to the above is therefore limited. Wholesale changes to delivery structures and language policies employed by organisations involved in the provision of work-based learning is, naturally, beyond the remit of the partnership's work.
- 3.2.3 One initiative led by Sgiliaith, working with WBL providers, that did produce positive outcomes was the pilot of the customer care training initiative. This involved focusing efforts on a targeted group of learners in a specific vocational area.
- 3.2.4 Indeed, discussions with two WBL providers, Arfon Dwyfor Training (ADT) and Hyfforddiant Môn have found that progress is being made. Working with staff at Sgiliaith, bilingual resources have been produced enabling training in management, customer service and health and safety to be delivered bilingually. While acknowledging that they are starting from a low base, ADT note that increasing numbers of learners are undertaking bilingual work-based learning.
- 3.2.5 A partnership between Sgiliaith and ADT aimed at providing bilingual work-based learning opportunities in public sector settings has borne fruit. One employee of Cyngor Gwynedd who contributed evidence to the evaluation noted:

'I'm undertaking my Level 4 NVQ completely through the medium of Welsh, as this is main language of the department in which I work and therefore all the evidence and testimony I'm compiling is in Welsh. The ILM course I did was in English as some of the tutors were not Welsh speakers and so it was the only real option I had. Learning through the medium of Welsh comes far more naturally to me and so the ILM project was a challenge – having said that, it probably did me some good!'

Work-based learner, North Wales

- 3.2.6 The comments above illustrate some of the systemic weaknesses that act as a brake on developments in bilingual work-based learning. A lack of tutors (and assessors) means that – even in areas of Wales with a high proportion of Welsh-speakers – choice is extremely limited.
- 3.2.7 There is also a vicious cycle that hampers development. The evaluation team contacted a sample of other work-based learning providers across Wales to obtain a snapshot of the extent to which they offer bilingual learning opportunities and levels of learner demand for bilingual provision. Responses indicated low levels of demand from learners, meaning that for most providers this is not a priority area: this is considered a low priority and, as learner demand dictates their approach to business planning, most are not actively seeking to develop new bilingual skills among their tutors or trainers.

3.3 Conclusions

- 3.3.1 Although the outcomes under this strand of the partnership’s work fall short of what was originally planned, the work carried out by Sgiliaith has led to a more robust understanding of the practical barriers and constraints to developing bilingual work-based learning. Given the outcomes of the first year’s work, Sgiliaith was correct not to proceed to pilot a broad centre-based structure.
- 3.3.2 Based on evidence collected to date and due to the outcomes from this strand of the partnership’s work, it is proposed that bilingualism in work-based learning should not form a core part of Sgiliaith’s remit under a new contract. However, the partnership should be enabled to support developments in bilingual WBL in a more focused way. Work during the course of the contract period has shown that more intensive and tailored support can reap rewards and can help instil a shift in attitudes and working practices among work-based providers that can pave the way for new bilingual provision.

4 ACCREDITATION AND PROMOTION OF THE IAITH AR WAITH UNITS

4.1 Background

- 4.1.1 Sgiliaith has been central to the development and piloting of the Iaith ar Waith units, which enables learners to improve their bilingual skills for use in the workplace. Working with partners at Coleg Menai, Sgiliaith developed Open College Network units to develop bilingual customer care skills.
- 4.1.2 The units were targeted at Welsh-speakers and post-16 students who previously attended Welsh-medium education. By developing Welsh language skills in specific subject areas the units are intended to instil learners with the confidence and vocabulary to respond to Welsh-speaking customers and clients in the workplace. Staff at Sgiliaith have been both proactive and effective in adapting the units, recruiting colleges to pilot the units and training tutors in their delivery.
- 4.1.3 An important aspect of the contract involved negotiating with awarding bodies with a view to formalising the Iaith ar Waith units. This has happened ahead of schedule, with Sgiliaith having led productive negotiations with the WJEC, who now provide formal accreditation for Iaith ar Waith at four different levels. Pilots are being run during 2008/09, and the units have met with a positive reception from both practitioners and learners.
- 4.1.4 The flexibility of Iaith ar Waith (which can be used as additional language unit to supplement a range of different courses with a customer care dimension) means that it has broad appeal. While it was developed originally by Sgiliaith in partnership with Coleg Menai, it has since been taken on and piloted in a number of other colleges in north and south Wales.

4.2 Meeting learner needs

- 4.2.1 In some respects, Iaith ar Waith signals a new approach to promoting bilingualism among learners in further education. Research that Sgiliaith itself conducted into student attitudes towards developing and using Welsh in FE found that there was a need to emphasise the importance of bilingual skills in terms of employability.

Introducing and marketing new bilingual units, it was felt, needed to tap into learners' aspirations and communicate the message that bilingual skills can serve as an additional (marketable) skill in the workplace. This was supported by one FE representative who commented:

'The appeal for learners is that this is another string to their bow. The units provide added recognition, if you like, of the skills they possess that they might otherwise not appreciate or think about as being relevant to their field. Although it's early days, Iaith ar Waith seems to have been pitched at the right level and at the right target groups.'

4.3 Response from colleges

4.3.1 Although still only at its pilot stage, the response from managers and practitioners thus far has been positive – in colleges in north and south Wales. One clear advantage is the flexibility: the *Iaith ar Waith* units complement a range of disciplines which involve interaction with the public. Colleges can therefore take ownership and identify where opportunities exist within their portfolio of courses.

'The units are clear, well-structured and provide added value.'

'In a bilingual Wales, good customer care means being able to provide services to clients in a choice of languages. In principle it's a good move and in practice the units work well.'

FE sector representatives

4.4 Conclusions

4.4.1 This strand of the contract illustrates how Sgiliaith is uniquely placed to provide a central support service to develop bilingual provision and resources. Through its close work with colleges it recognised that, while efforts were being made to deliver bilingual vocational training, there was no recognition for learners and

consequently little incentive for institutions to seek out opportunities to increase provision. Having identified demand, Sgiliaith was able to lead on the development of the materials, arrange and deliver training, market the units and negotiate the formal recognition of the units. It is difficult to see how or where such a range of skills could be applied from any other existing organisation.

4.4.2 As noted above, it is indeed early days and there remains a considerable amount of work to be done to extend *laith ar Waith* across other FE colleges in Wales. Sgiliaith hopes that the pilot phase will reveal a sufficient appetite among participating colleges to justify rolling the *laith ar Waith* units out more broadly and possibly identifying further subject areas to which the units can be applied or introduced.

4.4.3 It is likely that there are lessons to be learnt from the piloting of *laith ar Waith*, both in terms of the structure of the units, college-level delivery and marketing. Sgiliaith staff consulted during the study reported that they intend to evaluate the outcomes and impacts at the end of the pilot phase (end of academic year 2008-09), which will provide an opportunity to identify these lessons and inform the continued expansion of the units. Sgiliaith should continue to play a central role in promoting the units and in providing advice and guidance to colleges as they identify courses and disciplines that *laith ar Waith can* complement.

5 SUPPORT IN IDENTIFYING WELSH-MEDIUM AND BILINGUAL RESOURCE NEEDS AND NETWORKING

5.1 Background and contractual obligations

5.1.1 Under the obligations of the fourth aspect of the contract the partnership was remitted to identify experts to support resource development in each of the seven designated priority areas¹. This was intended to build on Sgiliaith/CYDAG's previous work with subject panels during 2005-07. Priority subjects had been determined by ELWa:

“to meet the needs of the workplace in sectors where there is a strong demand for Welsh language skills or where employers may gain an economic benefit from promoting the Welsh language.”²

5.1.2 Resource panels (*paneli pwnc*) were subject-based groups of practitioners – mainly drawn from the FE sector but with some representation from schools – that were administered by Sgiliaith staff. These groups were convened to discuss a range of issues linked to bilingual resources in their particular field, identifying gaps and feeding suggestions into DCELLS' Welsh medium and bilingual resource commissioning process.

5.1.3 A specific objective set as part of the current contract was to arrange and hold subject panels to be attended by 10 providers in each priority area and to include training in the use of Rhannu facilities in relevant subjects.

5.1.4 Difficulties in convening subject panels and maximising their input into resource development and the resource commissioning process managed by DCELLS have been encountered over a number of years. Some of these same difficulties were experienced during this contract period:

¹ namely Early Years, Health and Social Care, Business, Tourism, the Welsh Baccaulaureate, Agriculture and Drama/Media/Performing Arts. These built on the priority subject areas agreed with ELWa during the first year of the previous contract. The Welsh Baccaulaureate was included as an additional subject area.

² *Commissioning Welsh Medium and Bilingual Learning and Teaching Resources 2003-04* (ELWa Circular Ref: NC/C/03/03SLD) April 2003

- Difficulties were reported in arranging convenient times to suit teachers and lecturers.
- Turnover / short-term membership of subject panels (i.e. while it has been possible to get representatives to attend, many do not attend subsequent get-togethers, meaning there is little continuity to programmes of activity, which makes it difficult to plan resource development in some cases).
- A shortage of individuals delivering bilingual provision across the sector in some subject areas. (it was noted that the target of 10 providers to attend a subject panel meeting in some priority areas is unrealistic).

5.1.5 These difficulties have been noted in previous evaluations (Evaluation of the Learning Challenge Fund, Shared Intelligence 2006) which recommended combining resource panel meetings with other events. These recommendations have already been taken up as well as attempts to limit travel times by conducting resource panel meetings via video conference. However, the extent to which these efforts have been successful in overcoming some of the participation challenges appears to be limited to date.

5.1.6 In the event, resource panels did take place in some of the priority areas: health and social care, agriculture and tourism. In addition sessions were arranged by video-conference with subject experts in drama/media studies and business. Feedback received from participants indicates mixed outcomes from these resource panels. The consensus is that a more stream-lined approach is required, enabling practitioners from across the sector to feed their ideas into DCELLS' commissioning programme but channelled through a single point or individual.

5.2 Revised approach

5.2.1 To date resource panels have taken place at irregular intervals, with the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership providing administrative support to help facilitate or convene meetings, whether face-to-face or by video-conference.

5.2.2 Following a meeting of the Strategic Group for resource development in early 2008 and subsequent internal discussions within the Welsh Language Development Unit in DCELLS a change of approach is planned. The intention is to

appoint individual Subject Officers (*Swyddogion Pwnc*) to lead on developments, working some 20 days per year. At the time of writing, the appointment process is in its final stages. Sgiliaith's knowledge of developments in specific subject areas and its network of contacts are likely to remain important assets to the Subject Officers and it is suggested that these officers should be able to consult with, and request input from, Sgiliaith staff where necessary.

- 5.2.3 In view of the changing policy environment relating to priority vocational subject areas the role of Sgiliaith/CYDAG in relation to the resource panels may also need to change in the future. Their role may need to focus less on the administrative role of advertising and coordinating the formation of the panels to one which has greater focus on informing the development of bilingual resources in key subject areas. Their role may also need to change or expand to include the collection of information from relevant Sector Skills Councils which could also inform the development of further bilingual resources.

6 CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Diversity of roles and functions

6.1.1 Measuring the contribution of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership to the development of bilingual provision in the broad sense presents inherent difficulties. The partnership makes different kinds of contributions to each of the four key elements of the contract.

6.1.2 In some cases, Sgiliaith/CYDAG leads an initiative and is the sole deliverer of a programme of activity (e.g. in the case of the 3-day methodology training). In other instances, the partnership contributes to a wider national programme, playing a particular role and making a discrete contribution (National Sabbaticals Scheme). The partnership is in some cases a facilitator, bringing other partners together to encourage new collaborative activity or to share good practice. In short the partnership applies its expertise and knowledge of bilingual provision in the post-16 sector in a number of different ways: in each case, this evaluation has found that the support and training provided is constructive, is valued and draws on specialist understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced in promoting bilingual education.

6.2 Summary of performance against intended outputs

6.2.1 The table below aims to summarise these different contributions, referring to the obligations included in the Partnership's contract with the Welsh Assembly Government between 2007-09. It also provides the evaluators' initial views on effectiveness and whether each element is a priority to be addressed beyond the contract period.

6.2.2 Following the table, we summarise conclusions relating to key evaluation questions set out.

TABLE 2 – Overview of findings

ELEMENT OF CONTRACT	ROLE OF SGILIAITH/CYDAG PARTNERSHIP	BROAD CONCLUSION; FUTURE PRIORITY?
BILINGUALISM TRAINING IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES		
3-day methodology training	Developed the programme; is responsible for promoting and delivering the training	<p>Considered effective by participants and schools and colleges. Medium and longer term impact not fully understood. Evidence of gradually increasing demand for training, following more widespread promotion.</p> <p>Should continue to be a priority under a revised contract, with the possibility of more widespread bilingual provision being planned under 14-19 local curriculum developments.</p>
Support for the development of new teaching and learning standards by LLUK	A key contributor and advisor to LLUK on the development of standards for bilingual and Welsh medium teaching.	<p>A valuable contribution.</p> <p>Unclear to what extent there will be an ongoing demand for the partnership's contribution to similar Wales-specific directions, guidance and standards. Requires further consideration.</p>
Methodology training sessions as part of the National Sabbaticals Scheme	Contributes the pedagogical / methodological training to supplement the language training delivered at Bangor and Cardiff.	<p>The partnership is uniquely placed to provide this aspect of training under the Sabbaticals Scheme. Strongly positive response.</p> <p>Will remain an important feature of the scheme and, as such, should continue to be supported as part of a new contract.</p>

Mentoring support	Leads the design and delivery of the pilot mentoring programme; in process of developing mentoring programme focused on past Sabbaticals Scheme participants.	<p>Sgiliaith will play a key role in supporting further mentoring programmes in the future, focusing largely on those who have participated in the Sabbaticals Scheme.</p> <p>Lessons from the pilot project suggest that Sgiliaith should approach future mentoring support projects in a similar way to the pilot; although further consideration could be made to enable the mentoring process, where required, to take place over a longer time period than the three months allocated to the pilot.</p>
Training and good practice sessions for staff	Leads all aspects of this strand	<p>This aspect is steered by key policy development and issues identified by practitioners. Greater scope to promote sharing of resources and skills remotely. The partnership, through its knowledge of what resources are available and what could be used more widely across the post-16 sector, should continue to lead on this. In some cases this will necessarily involve working closely with partners (e.g. NGfL).</p> <p>As a central support service, the partnership needs to be able to be responsive to emerging issues and to be able to deliver tailored training, advice and guidance. Is therefore an ongoing priority.</p>
TRAINING TO DEVELOP BILINGUALISM IN WORK-BASED LEARNING	Partnership tasked with coordinating efforts to enhance bilingual provision.	Has not progressed as intended, with systemic weaknesses in bilingual WBL provision that Sgiliaith/CYDAG are not in a position to impact upon fundamentally. Some progress through targeted work with specific WBL

		<p>providers.</p> <p>This presents a potential option for next contract – the development of good practice guidance on bilingual WBL based on progress in some key areas.</p>
<p>ACCREDITATION AND PROMOTION OF THE IAITH AR WAITH UNITS</p>	<p>Lead partner: develops and markets the units; provides training to tutors; ensured formal accredited status; monitors outcomes.</p>	<p>Good progress is being made, based on the findings of this evaluation.</p> <p>The partnership will have an important role to advise on any wider roll-out of the units following the pilot phase.</p>
<p>SUPPORT IN IDENTIFYING WELSH-MEDIUM AND BILINGUAL RESOURCE NEEDS AND NETWORKING</p>	<p>A key role in encouraging the participation of resource panel members; also raises awareness through its network of contacts across the sector.</p>	<p>The resource panels and the focus on developing new and alternative bilingual resources may need to be broadened to include more subject areas than the six currently prioritised.</p> <p>The role of Sgiliaith may need to focus less on administrative aspects linked to facilitating resource panel meetings and play a more strategic role in terms of informing the development of bilingual resources in key subject areas.</p>

6.3 Strengths and weaknesses of the 'Sgiliaith model'

- 6.3.1 The Sgiliaith model is that of a central support service based within an existing FE institution. The institution in question (Coleg Meirion Dwyfor) has a tradition of delivering bilingual post-16 provision, providing opportunities for Sgiliaith's staff to develop the skills and expertise to provide sector-wide support. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this existing model of delivery?
- 6.3.2 One advantage to having a central support service based within an existing FE institution is that it offers an institutionalised structure that is (to some extent) protected from the pressures and uncertainties often associated with short term funding programmes. In this respect, staff retention is key: the services provided by Sgiliaith are based on specific (individual) skills, knowledge and experience and therefore the partnership's ability to deliver is largely reliant on those skills and that experience being retained.
- 6.3.3 The model is also based on the principle of providing support to the sector 'from within'. The services delivered by the partnership are practitioner focused and therefore having a central resource which is embedded in the sector enables those involved to operate from a practitioners perspective. This in turn enables the partnership to be more responsive to emerging priorities and strategies. In this respect, close links with the Bilingualism Policy Branch within DCELLS are essential to the model's success, ensuring that the partnership is aware of policy development that impacts upon its activities and the context within which it functions. The evaluation has found there to be a professional and solid working relationship between both parties.
- 6.3.4 On a practical level having a central resource located within a college enables some resources to be shared increasing the efficiency of delivering services in comparison to having a central resource located elsewhere.
- 6.3.5 One might wonder whether Sgiliaith's location within a college in north west Wales presents problems in terms of being able to deliver support across the sector as a whole. This is not supported by evidence. The centre's 'reach' has widened in recent years and the range of institutions engaged in various activities led by the partnership (which training programmes or other initiatives) indicates

that support is provided across the length and breadth of the country. FE colleges in south east Wales, for example, are involved in the pilot of Iaith ar Waith; a college in south west Wales was the focus for mentoring activity.

- 6.3.6 As alluded to above in section 6.3.2, one of the potential weaknesses of Sgiliaith (and the model it represents) is that it is very dependent on the expertise of relatively few individuals. This raises some concern over the sustainability and potential longer term stability of activities supported by Sgiliaith. It also raises questions about the organisation's capacity to be able to respond to increases in demand for some of the training the partnership delivers.
- 6.3.7 This section does not seek to present a comprehensive appraisal of alternative models. However, we consider that the existing arrangement delivers an effective central support service for the following principal reasons:
- i) It is uniquely placed to deliver training and guidance from a **practitioner-perspective**.
 - ii) As a partnership, Sgiliaith and CYDAG have shown themselves to be **dynamic and swift to respond to change**, working with the Welsh Assembly Government to amend and refresh approaches to reflect changing circumstances; amendments to the original contractual obligations have not been made without careful consideration and neither do they reduce the need for longer term planning. Changes such as those noted have only been approved after a strong case to do so has been put forward. However, the basis upon which decisions to make such changes have been made reflects the extent to which those managing Sgiliaith and the funding process understand the sector and the challenging and changing environment within which it operates.
 - iii) Much of the partnership's effectiveness stems from **knowledge** of issues, opportunities and barriers in developing bilingual provision and **networks** (in colleges and schools). Such knowledge is developed piecemeal, and such networks are largely based on trust and established working relationships: these cannot be easily replicated or reproduced in other contexts.

6.3.8 The evaluation therefore recommends that this model, which is considered to be an efficient approach to delivering a central support service for the whole of Wales, be sustained and further built upon.

6.4 Balance of the partnership

6.4.1 How complementary are the roles of Sgiliaith and CYDAG as partners and what is the specific expertise provided by each party? Sgiliaith is clearly the lead partner and is responsible for delivering the vast majority of the activities defined in the current contract. This being said, CYDAG plays an important and complementary role in terms of broadening the appeal and market for the services provided by Sgiliaith through its affiliated schools. The emergence of the 14-19 Learning Pathways agenda means that ever-greater linkages will develop between schools and further education institutions, strengthening the case for representation from both sectors on the partnership. To this end the partnership works very effectively as both parties share a common aim without duplicating efforts or giving rise to conflicts of interest.

6.4.2 What about other key partners? Sgiliaith already works closely with *fforwm*, a key strategic partner in communicating the opportunities to enhance bilingual provision. While the partnership also has existing links with Bilingual Champions and bilingualism managers within FE colleges, there are perhaps opportunities to formalise these links and use these key individuals to help promote its services and bilingual developments. The roll out of the *laith ar Waith* units presents opportunities to work strategically with other partners in the sector to maximise the impact and reach of the units.

6.5 Additional unintended effects of the partnership

6.5.1 Qualitative evidence from some of the schools and colleges that contributed evidence to the evaluation has revealed the added value and wider impact of the support provided by the partnership. Practitioners reported that they disseminated the lessons learned and good practice gained during sessions among colleagues back in their own institutions. It has been suggested that this 'cascading' down of information and guidance among practitioner groups can help

increase the appetite for bilingual learning among a wider cohort of teaching staff and thereby add value to the core services delivered by the partnership.

6.6 Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

General

- i. DCELLS should provide funding to enable the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership to continue in its role as a central support service in the development of Welsh-medium and bilingual provision.
- ii. The partnership's remit should reflect the importance of 14-19 networks in planning (bilingual) learning provision and therefore not be confined to supporting developments in post-16 provision.
- iii. The Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership, working with the Welsh Assembly Government, should explore the possibility of developing stronger links with higher education institutions in order:
 - a) to develop a sounding board with whom to test current bilingual training practices and theory; and
 - b) to link into good practice developed by bilingualism experts in HEIs.

Focus of activities

- iv. While recognising the need for contractual requirements and obligations to take into account priorities identified in the Welsh Assembly Government's forthcoming Welsh Medium Education Strategy, we consider that the following should be core elements of the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership's remit:
 - a) Bilingualism training in schools and colleges to develop the skills of practitioners.
 - b) Further promotion of the Iaith ar Waith units, taking forward findings from the evaluation of the pilot phase that will be published later this year.
 - c) Strategic support to the Subject Officers soon to be appointed to lead on bilingual resource development.

3-day methodology training

- v. Sgiliaith should ensure that the monitoring data collected following the 3-day methodology training identifies how schools and colleges became aware of the training in order to inform the broader marketing of the training.
- vi. Sgiliaith should consider inviting those who have taken part in the 3-day methodology training to attend 'refresher' courses within the first 18 months of the original sessions.

Work-based learning

- vii. The partnership should consider a reduced focus on bilingualism in work-based learning as a core part of Sgiliaith's remit under a new contract. This will release some capacity and resources to respond to possible increases in demand for other core services which the partnership supports.
- viii. However, in order to make best use of the outcomes from work in WBL undertaken during this contract period, Sgiliaith should develop and disseminate good practice guidance on bilingual WBL based on progress made during the current contract period.

Contribution to bilingual resource development

- ix. The role of Sgiliaith may need to focus less on administrative aspects linked to facilitating resource panel meetings and play a more strategic role in terms of informing the development of bilingual resources in key subject areas.

Contribution to 14-19 networks

- x. Building on Recommendation 2, above, DCELLS should consider whether there is a role for the Sgiliaith/CYDAG partnership in supporting 14-19 networks in their planning and delivery of bilingual and Welsh-medium provision. This could include the promotion of bilingualism training or seeking guidance from the partnership to facilitate regional-based approaches to the delivery of some provision.

Work in support of LLUK-led developments

- xi. A revised contract should make provision to enable Sgiliaith to support projects undertaken by LLUK that focus on developing bilingualism in the lifelong learning sector.

Other partners

- xii. The Bilingual Policy branch within DCELLS, alongside Sgiliaith, should consider what scope exists to work on a more formal basis with Bilingual Champions and bilingualism managers in FE colleges to further promote developments in bilingual learning, including the laith ar Waith units.

Staffing

- xiii. Working with the Bilingual Policy branch, Sgiliaith should conduct a review of its internal staffing arrangements with a view to ensuring a stable and sustainable structure that is not over-reliant on the skills and expertise of a few individuals. This may require the appointment of additional full-time member of staff to assist with the growing demands for the partnership's training and support services.