

This resource:

- Introduces the work of the **Camau i'r Dyfodol** project
- Presents some of our findings from **Phase 1** of the project
- Sets out some **early implications and questions for schools and settings**

What is Camau i'r Dyfodol?

Curriculum for Wales asks us to take a more rounded view of a learner's achievements, recognising that each starts at a different point and progresses in different ways.

Camau i'r Dyfodol is designed to better understand what that means for learners, practitioners and the wider education system.

The University of Wales Trinity Saint David, the University of Glasgow and the Welsh Government are collaborating with practitioners and educational partners to develop practical understandings of progression to support curriculum realisation in Wales.

The project is divided into four phases, with each informing the next.

Phase 1

Understanding where we are

Phase 2

Shared knowledge-building

Phase 3

Building system capacity

Phase 4

Self-sustaining system

Phase 1 focused on:

- finding out **how practitioners and leaders are working towards learning progression** and curriculum realisation
- better understanding the **relationships** between curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and progression
- the role of **co-construction** in supporting curriculum design and in supporting educational change generally

We did this through:

- **a literature review** to understand the research on relationships between curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and learning progression
- **National Network conversations** with practitioners to understand how they are approaching progression
- **discussion groups** with practitioners, leaders, and partners to explore how they are thinking about progression and working with others
- **developing an emerging model of co-construction** to support the project's work

What have we found?

- **Phase 1** has given us a number of insights about how progression is being understood and realised across the education system
- These insights are helping to inform future work in the project, including the development of supporting materials for progression in **Phase 2** and beyond

1

Co-construction and collaboration

- Schools and clusters are strongly committed to collaboration and improvement
- Collaboration can be a challenging but powerful tool for educational change
- There is a need to ensure a balance between practitioners' autonomy and the need for coherence across schools
- Effective co-construction requires thinking space and time for engaging in dialogue and problem-solving to create new knowledge.
- It can be hard to let go of old ideas and to tease apart complex ones, but also very rewarding for participants and the design process

2

Progression in Learning and Learning Progressions

- There are **distinctly different ways of thinking about progression**:
 - The Curriculum for Wales has a broad concept of ***progression in learning*** – described by principles of progression which set out how learners should progress across *all learning*, and in a way responsive to learner needs
 - Research literature tends to focus more on ***subject-specific learning progressions*** – pathways along which learning might progress in a given area. These can support thinking about learning (using learner evidence) but should not be seen as fixed routes for all learners
- Formative assessment is key to supporting progression in learning – the adaptive expertise of practitioners is key
- Schools and clusters are working together to develop shared understandings of progression, and assessment for progression
- The relationship between curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and progression in learning has not yet been fully explored in research

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3

Assessing progression

- Practitioners are working hard to assess progression in ways that are **authentic, formative, and embedded** in day-to-day learning.
- Learners are increasingly **at the centre** of the assessment process.
- **Different starting points and approaches** to assessing progression are being thoughtfully explored, but currently none are emerging consistently.
- There remain some questions about the interaction of qualifications and curriculum design, but a strong commitment to maintain and build on the work being done to develop progression in curriculum design.

4

Culture change and curriculum

- Practitioners are **embracing the challenge of culture change** and adapting to new expectations.
- The Curriculum for Wales guidance provides essential information and an important foundation for practitioner creativity and innovation, although refinements could be made over time.

Co-construction: from insights to action

- **Phase 1** of the project provided further insights directly relevant to schools and settings
- This page includes **insights** on the process of co-construction, **reflective questions** to ask of your own approach, and **considerations for action** in your context. Further considerations for action can be found in *[The Journey to Curriculum Roll-out](#)*.

Key insight

Reflective question

Consideration for action

Working and thinking together **across schools, phases, and clusters** can support co-construction.

With whom could you work in this way?

- Encouraging collaborative approaches with cluster schools, cross-regional partnerships, universities, professional bodies

Encouraging **supportive criticality** in co-construction can help move away from embedded thinking and support culture change.

How can you provide this encouragement?

- Having the right environment for discussions about progression, cross departmental opportunities, on-going cluster conversations focusing on learner development

Co-construction brings **shifts in confidence** in participants. It is important to **untangle the knots** as they come up.

What could help when confidence wanes?
How can you persevere with knotty issues?

- Engaging with inputs (including existing **Welsh Government supporting materials** and wider research) to help thinking
- Designated time to discuss ideas
- Supporting cross-Area collaboration
- Identifying staff opportunities to develop a shared understanding of progression through the school

There will be tensions between the dynamic process of co-construction and putting approaches into practice in class.

How can you help to keep these two factors in balance?

- Providing designated time and positive environments for staff to trial innovative approaches, **evaluate the approaches** with evidence, and engage with relevant **supporting materials**.

Developing progression: from insights to action

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Key insight

Reflective question

Consideration for action

Progression in learning (see [here](#)) is a broad concept in Curriculum for Wales and should not be conflated with a particular **learning progression**.

How have we considered *progression in learning* across our curriculum? How are we planning for this?

- Encourage staff to engage with existing supporting material and collaborate across school areas.
- Focus conversations on progression rather than on perceptions around accountability measures – on improving rather than proving.

Even a learning progression that is focused on a specific Area or discipline cannot be represented by a linear or definitive pathway for learning.

To what extent does that align with the understandings of your staff?

- Encourage staff to engage with guidance and collaborate, focussing on what is important in their Areas and for the development of the learner, rather than working toward atomised objectives. This means valuing the process of learning, not only the end product of it.

A high-level understanding of how a learner develops over time is important for longer-term planning. Practitioners can use this to develop ideas of progression that support classroom interactions.

How could this idea inform short and long-term planning in your classrooms?

- Ensure that staff incorporate an understanding of long-term learner development into their approach to progression, drawing on the curriculum guidance and practitioners own knowledge of their learners.

Conversations to have in your context

- These conversation questions are drawn from Phase 2 of *Camau i'r Dyfodol* and ongoing National Network Conversations.
- You can use these questions to **prompt conversation**, **challenge thinking**, **stimulate discussion** and **build confidence** around different parts of the Curriculum guidance on progression with staff in your own school or setting.

Questions

Reflections from Curriculum for Wales guidance

1

How do we understand what progression means and how is this informing how we plan it?

Principles of progression articulate how learners should progress in their learning towards the **four purposes**. This means that progression must be embedded in learning and teaching and should form the basis of thinking in schools when designing and planning the school curriculum.

2

How do subject areas influence our thinking on progression?

Curriculum for Wales does not prescribe a list of topics or activities, but the essence of learning which should underpin them. Drawing on the guidance, schools must decide what experiences, knowledge and skills in the Areas will support their learners to realise the four purposes.

3

How far should our curriculum be thematic or interdisciplinary at the broad general phase?

The six Areas bring together familiar disciplines and encourage strong and meaningful links across them. Those individual disciplines still play an important role, especially as learners progress and begin to specialise. ***The Journey to Curriculum Rollout*** includes guidance on the approach to progression in disciplines.

4

How do different learners shape our thinking on learning progression?

Schools should be aware of the needs and circumstances of all learners when designing their curriculum. Existing Welsh Government **supporting materials on assessment** have emphasised the importance of practitioners' own expectations of learners and professional judgement informing the approach to progression

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Questions

Reflections from Curriculum for Wales guidance

5

How are our learners thinking about our new curriculum, and how are they involved?

A school's curriculum should draw on **learner voice** and respond to learners' needs, experiences and input. Similarly, a learner should be supported to think about their own progress over time.

6

How do we avoid progression becoming a 'tick box exercise'?

Descriptions of learning provide **reference points** for what progression looks like as learners develop towards the statements of what matters. These need to be taken *with* the principles of progression to understand what it means for learners to progress.

7

How can we create manageable and meaningful assessment to understand and support learner progression?

The **purpose of assessment** is to support the progression of each individual learner in relation to the 3 to 16 continuum. Learners are at the heart of assessment and should be supported to become active participants in the learning process. Assessment is an ongoing process which is indistinguishable from learning and teaching.

8

What kinds of information on progression do we need for learners and their parents or carers?

Schools and settings need to **share information with parents and carers** about: the progress their child is making; their future progression needs; how progression needs can be supported at home; their general well-being at school. It is for schools to decide what information best represents the progress learners are making against their curriculum

Next steps

Phase 2 has brought together a co-construction group of practitioners, educational partners, and researchers to identify priority areas and opportunities to develop supporting materials. The group is using evidence from research, policy, and practice to:

- **explore ideas of progression in learning** which include discipline-based learning
- understand the **support schools and settings need** to bring about culture change
- find a balance between **national coherence and local autonomy**

Through this process, the group is developing **new supporting materials**, including:

- **practical guides** of what progression could look like with examples in different contexts
- **principles** important to developing progression in curricula
- **question-based resources** to support practitioners
- other materials with **school-based ideas** to support learning progression

The **Phase 1 Report**, with more detailed findings will be published at the end of this term

The **Phase 2 supporting materials** will be published at the start of the new academic year

For queries about this work or to learn more, contact camau@uwtsd.ac.uk

Finding existing supporting materials and case studies

Access [written and video case studies](#) produced by the Welsh Government of how schools are approaching **progression in curriculum design**, including their **planning, assessment, and reporting to parents and carers**.

Access existing Welsh Government **supporting materials and guides** on:

- [Designing a curriculum with purpose](#)
- [Principles of progression: supporting self-evaluation and a shared understanding of progression](#)
- [Developing a shared understanding of progression](#)
- [Assessing learner progress](#)
- [Self-evaluation and improvement: learner progress](#)

[The Curriculum for Wales Planning and Priorities guide](#) contains information for those at all stages of their reform journey and links to other key guidance.

[Camau Assessing for the Future workshops](#) have been developed to support practitioners designing assessment arrangements in Curriculum for Wales.

[The National Resource: Evaluation and Improvement](#) includes prompts to stimulate thinking and dialogue, including on Curriculum for Wales and the learners and learning at its heart.