

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Education Directorate Self-Evaluation**

Team/Service: Education Directorate

Title of the evaluation: Post 16 Learning Outcomes

**Date of report: October 2019
Report author: Lynn Phillips/Jo Sims**

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Service Area:	Education Directorate
Date report written:	October 2019
Focus for the evaluation	The focus of the FADE is post 16 learner outcomes, including both the Learning Zone and Work Based Learning (WBL) opportunities.
Analysis (A)	<p>The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone was established in 2012/2013, following a review of post 16 provision across the County Borough. The post 16 review was a highly contentious school re-organisation project that involved the removal of three sixth forms from secondary schools and the development of a tertiary partnership model in association with Coleg Gwent. The Council project managed the new Learning Zone building to include design, procurement and construction of the £33m post 16 learning establishment.</p> <p>There is a strong partnership arrangement between the Council and Coleg Gwent, which has matured during recent years. The Learning Zone delivers an annual performance report to the Council, which features as a key component of the Education and Learning Scrutiny Committee's forward work programme.</p> <p>In addition to the Learning Zone, a number of post 16 Work Based Learning organisations provide alternative training opportunities across Blaenau Gwent. These organisations include ACT, Sgiliau (a sub contracted provider for ITEC), and Llamau. Furthermore, an Aspire Apprenticeship programme is delivered by BGCBC and further opportunities are available through organisations such as Tai Calon. All of these partners are active members of the Raising Aspirations Group (RAG), a strategic multi-agency partnership co-ordinating the work around young people who are at risk of becoming or are currently NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).</p>

Evaluation (E)**By way of:**

- **Outcomes (or process or change)**
- **Provision**
- **Leadership and management**

This FADE provides an overview report on the Learning Zone's performance, covering a trend analysis over the last 3 years. The FADE details performance information for both 'A' Level results as well as the vocational results.

(i) 'A' Level Results

The Council and Coleg Gwent produce a joint press release on 'A' Level results day. In August 2019, the headline messages included;

- Learning Zone (Ebbw Vale) had a 100% overall pass rate for A*-E, which is 2.6% above the Welsh average and 2.4% for the UK.
- The pass rate for grades A*-C was improved to 75.9%.
- All subjects had a 100% pass rate at the Learning Zone.

Coleg Gwent has provided a more detailed analysis of relative performance and a 3 year trend. Table (1) overleaf breaks down the Learning Zone's 'A' Level performance into the following;

- The total number of entries for 'A' Level over 2017 to 2019;
- The percentages of students who achieved the various grade performances A*/A, A*-C, A*-E between 2017-2019,
- A/S results over the period 2017 to 2019; and,
- The All Wales and UK benchmark for performance against grade ranges.

Table 1:

		No of Entries: A Levels	%A* - E	A* - C	A* - A	No of Entries: A/S Levels	%A* - E	A* - C	A* - A
Benchmark:	Wales	-	97.6% (97.4%)	76.3% (76.3%)	27.0% (26.3%)	-	90.0% (90.0%)	62.0% (61.9%)	20.3% (20.4%)
	UK	-	97.6% (97.6%)	75.8% (77.0%)	25.5% (26.4%)	-	88.8% (90.7%)	61.9% (66.3%)	21.5% (27.5%)
BGLZ:	2019	340	100.0	75.9	15.3	616	90.9	63.5	14.8
	2018	391	98.7	74.4	15.6	663	89.9	58.2	10.3
	2017	415	99.0	73.5	13.3	799	86.9	56.1	12.3

The results detailed in Table (1) highlight some key performance trends, including:

- An overall decrease in the level of entries for 'A' Levels over the 3-year cycle, but this is in line with the national picture in Wales and has been impacted by the introduction of the Welsh Baccalaureate;
- Very strong and improving performance (above Welsh average) for A*-E pass grades;
- An overall improvement in A*-A grades over the 3 years; and,
- Improvements in all A/S measures over the 3-year period.

There are also Blaenau Gwent Learners who have participated in A Level courses of study in Coleg Gwent establishments outside of the learning zone (different campuses such as Cross Keys College). The consolidated results for all Blaenau Gwent Learners are shown in the table (2) below/overleaf:

Table 2

Blaenau Gwent - Blaenau Gwent	Wales Benchmark			Blaenau Gwent Learners at Coleg Gwent		
	A*-E	A*-C	A*-A	A*-E (%)	A*-C (%)	A*-A (%)
A Level total	97.60%	76.30%	27.00%	99.46%	76.49%	16.76%
AS Level total	90.00%	62.00%	20.30%	91.63%	64.57%	14.49%

The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone's performance is benchmarked through their participation in the UK wide 'A Level Information Service' (ALIS) benchmarking model operated by the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring (CEM). In 2018, the Learning Zone's added-value performance (based on all students' socio-economic status and predictive grades) places performance in the top quartile of tertiary colleges in the UK. The Learning Zone benchmarking data placed the institution on the 92nd percentile i.e. top 8% for the UK and 1.4 standard deviation above the mean.

ii) Vocational Results

The provision of a broader range of vocational learning opportunities was a key strategic driver behind the creation of the Learning Zone.

The vocational results, again over 3 years, is illustrated in Table (3) overleaf. The performance is categorised into levels (level 2 is GCSE and level 3 is 'A' Level equivalents). The data covers the following areas:

- Enrolments (2018/19),
- 3 years completion (retention) data,
- 3 years attainment – pass mark data,
- Success data – product of completion and attainment data.

(NB. Success is the main matrix by which Estyn make their post 16 judgements. In 2018/19, the Learning Zone realised an overall 85% success rate. Estyn would categorise 85% as a Grade 1 – Excellent).

Table 3:

	Enrols	Completion			Attainment			Success		
	18/19	16/17	17/18	18/19	16/17	17/18	18/19	16/17	17/18	18/19
Main	1,994	93%	93%	90%	92%	93%	93%	86%	87%	84%
Entry	23	97%	97%	91%	100%	100%	100%	97%	97%	91%
Level 1	274	89%	91%	89%	98%	94%	96%	87%	85%	85%
Level 2	284	93%	89%	85%	90%	90%	94%	83%	80%	80%
Level 3	1,377	94%	94%	92%	92%	94%	92%	86%	88%	85%

The table illustrates that the main performance indicator (success) has had a consistently high performance profile over the last 3 years.

The partnership between the Council and Coleg Gwent in this academic year (2019/20) has further developed. A process is now in place that provides the Council with data indicating the level of post 16 withdrawal to enable specific and timely support for individual learners. An example of the data relating to October 2019 is shown in table (4) overleaf. Consequently, the information will enable appropriate support to be provided through partners within the Raising Aspirations Group.

Table 4

Course Followed	No. learners	No. withdrawn	Withdrawn learners	Destinations (if known)
A level	102	3	Personalised data to be shared via WASPI agreement	
AS level	101	2		
Level 1	117	6		
Level 2	156	5		
Level 3	236	1		
Entry Level	2	0		
Access courses	0	0		
Life Skills	21	0		

Work based Learning Providers and Apprenticeships

In addition to Coleg Gwent, there are a number of post 16 providers in Blaenau Gwent, who provide training and apprenticeships for young people via work based learning settings. To date, information from Llamau and Aspire Blaenau Gwent Apprenticeship scheme, gives a sense of the types of courses delivered. Further information will be included when it is received later in the Autumn term.

Llamau Learning 4 Life works with some of the most vulnerable young people (those experienced in care, youth justice system or Substance misuse). Their statistics are outlined below:

Sept 18 - Sept 19 Yearly Total	
No. of Referrals	32
No. of Starts	31
No. of Agored Awards	47
No. of C&G Awards	6
No. of Exits	26
No. of Move On's to Employment	5
No. of Move On's to Further Learning	15
No. of CV's	33
No. of Practice Interviews	12
No. of Site Visits	24
No. of Work Tasters	3
No. of Volunteering	7

Aspire Blaenau Gwent – Shared Apprenticeship Programme

The programme has facilitated over 80 apprentices based within Blaenau Gwent industry on various pathways including:-

- Electrical Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Applied Science
- IT
- EEP's
- Commercial focused Business Administration
- Quality Engineering

The team are now in a position to measure outcomes due to the first cohort of apprentices completing their apprenticeships. Below are the outcomes for the first cohort which began their apprenticeships in the academic year 2015/16:

Number of apprentices	Completed their framework	Entered Employment	Progressed onto further learning
18	16	14	9
Percentages	89%	78%	50%

The table above demonstrates that the programme has achieved good success within the first cohort of apprentices with over 89% completing their framework. It should also be noted that 50% of the apprentices have also extended their learning once they have completed their initial framework.

Development/Improvement required/Recommendation (R) and Way Forward:

By way of :

- Outcomes (or process or change)
- Provision

The Blaenau Gwent Learning Zone's performance in 2019 continues to improve overall. The transformation of post 16 provision across the County Borough has delivered;

- more post 16 learners,
- a greater range of courses, particularly for vocational provision;
- improved attainment levels, in most measures.

- **Leadership and management**

The Learning Zone will be presenting the 2018/2019 academic year performance to a Member Briefing in the Autumn term and this is an opportunity to have dialogue with Coleg Gwent as we strive for further improvement for all learners across the County Borough.

As further WBL results become available, the information will be included within the FADE document.

To conclude, the partnership between the Council and Coleg Gwent has matured and a systematic approach is in place to share data at a strategic and operational level. The partnership will be developed further through the establishment of a post 16-partnership board with representation from the Education Directorate, Coleg Gwent and Blaenau Gwent secondary school settings. The intention is for the partnership board to be in place by the spring term 2020.