

# Strategic Plan

2020–2021

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Y Ganolfan  
Dysgu Cymraeg  
Genedlaethol —  
National Centre  
for Learning Welsh



Dysgu  
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# Chief Executive's Foreword

Putting learners first is the aim of the National Centre for Learning Welsh, an organisation set up to provide strategic leadership for the Welsh for Adults sector. We work, with our course providers, as one national team providing the best service for learners and new speakers of Welsh. The aim is clear - to attract new learners and increase the numbers using Welsh every day.

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Since its inception in 2016, the Centre has worked with its providers to transform the Welsh Learning sector. Many of the developments have enabled us to respond strongly to the challenges of the 2020 Pandemic by maintaining the delivery of services to our learners through distance learning methods, whilst also starting new provision.

Digital developments include the introduction of a distance learning course that enables learners to follow part of the course independently online from May 2020; attracting over 1,300 beginners to those new courses; attracting nearly 7,000 learners to undertake the Centre's short online taster courses between March and May 2020; and providing 1,500 digital learning resources, including video, audio and interactive.

I am hugely grateful to all the tutors who have adapted to distance learning and fully supported their learners. The sector has been able to continue its work effectively despite the uncertainties around us. Indeed, because of the circumstances, we have seen an increased interest in learning Welsh, and we have been able to move quickly to respond to that demand.

The Centre's original intention was to publish a new Strategic Plan for the period from 2020. In the current circumstances, with uncertainty about future social distancing rules, the Centre has decided to extend the current plan for 2020-2021, and we will engage in public consultation on a new plan during 2021.

The Centre's priorities for the coming year will be to:

- Provide learners with comprehensive services for online and distance learning.
- Add to the online resources to support learning, making full use of our interactive site.
- Develop a new look Work Welsh programme following a reduction in available funding.
- Establish a Welsh at Home programme.
- Promote the available provision.

I would like to thank everyone who has supported the Centre and its work since its inception, and I look forward to further successful collaboration over the next period.

**Efa Gruffudd Jones Chief Executive  
National Centre for Learning Welsh  
July 2020**



# Vision

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## The core outcomes set for the Centre by the Welsh Government are to:

Be a **visible institution** setting a national strategic direction for the Welsh for Adults sector.

Provide **leadership** for the Centre's providers.

**Raise standards** in teaching and learning Welsh.

Develop a high quality, appropriate, modern, engaging **national curriculum** and produce resources suitable for a range of learners at all levels.

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## The aspirations of the Centre are to:

Increase the numbers who **know** about Welsh lessons.

Increase the numbers **learning** Welsh.

Increase the numbers attaining **fluency**.

Increase the numbers who **use** Welsh.

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## **PURPOSE**

The Centre provides strategic leadership for the Welsh for Adults sector.

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## **VALUES**

The Centre will ensure that learners of all backgrounds receive a welcome, support and encouragement on their language learning journey. The Centre will carry out its work professionally, progressively and with commitment.

## **VISION**

The Centre will lead a Welsh learning service which will contribute to the success of the language.

## **STRATEGY**

Five strategic objectives are set in order to accomplish this work. The Centre will cooperate closely with its providers who will offer a programme of lessons and activities for learners and with dedicated tutors to develop the sense of a single national team working towards the same aim.

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# Strategic Objective 1

## Develop an innovative programme of attractive and suitable courses for learners making full use of the latest technology

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To facilitate learner progress, programmes must be planned which contain an appropriate variety of courses accessible to all in terms of length, content and approach to linguistic presentation. Classes need to respond to demand in terms of venue, time of day, time of year and course length.

We will need to plan at a local level and improve the online offer. The Centre will engage with providers, tutors and language experts to ensure that the experience offered for learners develops. This will be achieved specifically by the:

- ▲ production of a new curriculum;
- ▲ production of a programme of progressive courses which increase learners' contact hours as they learn;
- ▲ production of new learning resources, with interactive resources at the core;
- ▲ production of resources to support learning outside the classroom; and
- ▲ development of an innovative online system of learning, assessment and coaching.

The Centre will **produce a new curriculum** of high quality which will serve as a basis for exciting new resources for learning the language. We will ensure that the curriculum serves as a benchmark for new and experienced tutors alike, providing a standard guide. The curriculum will describe the required language content for the range of attainment levels and define abilities in Welsh in the same way as the Common European Framework. It will dovetail with national developments on the development of a language continuum and ensure relevance to the experiences of individuals of all ages who are learning Welsh.

The current situation allows the majority to learn in two-hour classes only. In order to speed up the learning process, the Centre will aim for **a programme of courses that increases learners' contact hours as they learn**. Most will be expected to set aside an additional two hours per week to support their learning in class by following new resources online. Flexibility will be required in order to ensure that individuals without access to technology can continue to learn Welsh. As well as

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increasing the number of four hours per week courses, we intend to work with providers to increase the number of very intensive courses, where learners move more quickly through the levels. This may mean learning in extended blocks and encouraging learners to attend events, informal sessions and through personal contact with other learners and speakers. Two versions of the National Course are being developed: North and South.

The Centre will **commission and produce new learning resources with interactive resources at the core** to support, reinforce and build upon the content of the curriculum to ensure learners have every possible opportunity to become speakers. The aim here is to raise standards of teaching and learning in Welsh for Adults. In developing resources, relevant research in Wales and beyond will be addressed, and we will be prepared to experiment with different techniques.

In this way the Centre will consider relevant research work including comprehensive research by Cardiff University on learning methods, methodology and resources. We will also consider the obstacles to learning, including practical matters. Emphasis will be placed on the coaching role of tutors and the importance of introducing Welsh as a skill to learners.

So that learners can measure their progress consistently and objectively during their language journey, we will develop an **innovative online system for teaching, assessment and coaching** which will adopt the assessment for learning approach. This will be a scheme whereby learners measure their own progress, placing learners' needs at the heart of the assessment process. The system will furnish providers and the Centre with an excellent opportunity to measure the progress of learners throughout Wales. The Centre and its providers will be able to streamline learning resources and methods when results are analysed.

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# Actions

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## 2016 - 2017

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- ▲ Review and consult on existing curriculum by October 2016; ensure that there is a standard curriculum in place (consistent with the Common European Framework) which allows providers to prepare quality programmes of learning through the medium of traditional and more innovative learning experiences.
- ▲ Commission and prepare resources to accompany the new curriculum, including a strong interactive element with resources for Entry Level and Advanced 1 as a first step.
- ▲ Develop an innovative online programme whereby learners can recognise their progress as they learn, to empower them to follow the curriculum and lead on to fluency.
- ▲ Assemble and maintain a Curriculum and Resources Group and other relevant groups to consider research and methodology, consult and develop policies.

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## 2017 - 2020

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- ▲ Increase the number of viable intensive courses (at least 4 hours per week) offered across Wales.
- ▲ Continue to develop resources to accompany the new curriculum, working on courses at Entry 2, Intermediate, Advanced 2 and Advanced 3.
- ▲ Develop a programme of local and national training to support the introduction of the new curriculum and resources.
- ▲ Evaluate developments.

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## 2020 - 2021

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- ▲ Continue with 2016-2020 objectives where applicable.
  - ▲ Introduce National Blended Learning Courses at entry Level from September 2020, combining tutor-led distance learning with 25% independent online learning.
  - ▲ Continue to develop the blended learning content to offer more independent learning opportunities at a range of levels.
  - ▲ Provide support for providers to adapt to offer learners more choices, including distance and online learning.
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## Strategic Objective 2

### Develop innovative schemes to secure opportunities and contexts where learners can use their Welsh with confidence

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In order to increase the numbers who use their Welsh, we need to develop innovative schemes which provide further natural opportunities for learners to use their Welsh. Specific consideration will be given to the needs of less confident speakers, and former pupils of Welsh-medium schools who, for whatever reason, no longer use their Welsh. This includes opportunities to:

- ▲ use Welsh in the workplace;
- ▲ use Welsh with the family;
- ▲ use Welsh informally in the community and promote integration within communities;
- ▲ develop schemes to bring Welsh speakers and learners together; and
- ▲ enjoy radio and television programmes and new media in Welsh.

We will draw up a **Welsh in the Workplace** Strategy to support employers in preparing meaningful Welsh learning programmes in the workplace. This is one of the first priorities for the Centre, which will develop the strategy by creating partnerships with the Welsh Language Commissioner, the Public Services Staff Commission and other relevant bodies. We intend consulting with national bodies, local authorities, health boards, private sector companies and the third sector, to address the challenge of giving passive speakers confidence as well as teaching learners who have reached different stages of the language continuum.

The Strategy will include advice for employers on the best means of securing employees' progress in Welsh language skills including release from work. The aim will be to develop a recognised system where individuals can choose to learn or improve their Welsh in the workplace with a programme of tailored intensive or flexible courses, of benefit to both individual and employer. The Centre will consider approaches to finance and make recommendations.

The Centre will also prioritise provision available to individuals wishing to learn **Welsh for family** reasons. A new programme will be developed encompassing Welsh for the Family to offer more opportunities for parents to learn in order to speak Welsh with their children. Consideration will be given to the new education curriculum and to the needs of the education workforce and we will ensure that a range of suitable courses, with suitable curriculum, is available at convenient times. The Centre will be anxious to act at a strategic level with Welsh education authorities to develop this provision and seeks to work with key bodies in the third sector.

To enhance fluency, learners need to be introduced to **informal experiences in Welsh** in the community. Providers will be encouraged to make creative use of the Language Centres established throughout Wales as places where it is easier for learners to speak Welsh. The Centre also intends to work with providers to review existing informal provision. The aim will be to create new networks and opportunities supporting learners to use Welsh outside the classroom. The Centre will wish to encourage learners to take part in local and national Welsh festivals and events. The Centre will also wish to promote integration within communities where the language is strong and promote real opportunities for learners to use their language, creating new interactive and social networks where they don't naturally exist. A full programme of local activities and events for learners is an essential part of any successful learning programme.

To give learners opportunities to speak Welsh naturally, the Centre will develop transition plans to bring Welsh **speakers and learners** together in partnership with Welsh language movements and agencies, for example Merched y Wawr and Clybiau Gwawr womens' groups, the Welsh Language Initiatives, local and national eisteddfodau. Engaging online schemes will be considered to signpost learners to speakers and events. The Centre believes clear, simple Welsh should be used more often by individuals and institutions so that learners can become speakers. The Centre is also aware that Welsh speakers need to be given advice on how best to speak to learners.

We intend to work with providers and broadcasters to ensure that **learners enjoy radio and television programmes and new media in Welsh** by sharing information on the provision direct and by using content in lessons.

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# Actions

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## 2016 - 2017

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- ▲ Consult employers in developing a Welsh in the Workplace Strategy.
- ▲ Publish a Welsh in the Workplace Strategy.
- ▲ Run a pilot scheme with significant employers.
- ▲ Develop active partnerships with bodies in various sectors.
- ▲ Discuss informal and semi-formal provision with providers and partners.

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## 2017 - 2020

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- ▲ Create recognised guidance for Welsh in the Workplace.
- ▲ Following a review, publish a new Welsh for the Family Scheme.
- ▲ Promote informal learning in discussion with providers and map the opportunities available to learners.
- ▲ Create partnerships with S4C, Radio Cymru and the Welsh Books Council to secure an offering for learners.
- ▲ Develop a programme to bring learners and speakers together and provide guidance for institutions and speakers on how to communicate with learners.

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## 2020 - 2021

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- ▲ Continue with 2016-2020 objectives where applicable.
- ▲ Implement an alternative Work Welsh programme, providing employers with access to distance and online training.
- ▲ Implement the 'Welsh at Home' programme that has been announced.
- ▲ Develop a range of learner support activities to be delivered by alternative means over a period of social distancing





## Strategic Objective 3

### Establish a network of providers to offer a service of excellence

A transparent process to rationalise the number of providers was held and providers were appointed to act on behalf of the Centre from 1 August 2016.

Performance and accountability indicators will be agreed with providers in order to direct change strategically and cohesively and bring consistency to services across Wales.

In close cooperation with providers, we aim to:

- ▲ establish a National Quality Framework in order to aim for excellence;
- ▲ plan strategically and purposefully by developing a Data Management Plan;
- ▲ develop a professional workforce by preparing a Workforce Development Plan; and
- ▲ harmonise various factors, for example tutors' fees and pay, to secure national consistency.

The Centre's priority is to secure accessible provision of consistent quality in all parts of Wales, with a range of opportunities during the day, evening, and weekend. Emphasis will be given to courses which offer an extended opportunity to use Welsh, including residential courses. The provision must be of good quality - we wish to encourage individuals to attain their personal aims and progress from one level to the next towards fluency, taking advantage of all opportunities to put their new skills to work. In order to establish and maintain quality assurance structures, the Centre will prepare a **National Quality Framework** to harmonise the service and recognise excellence. Estyn will be a key partner in developing the Quality Framework in order to ensure consistent requirements.

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Acquisition of accessible, meaningful and reliable data has been hampered by the fact that sector data has for several years been submitted to the Government through different systems. The establishment of a **Data Management Plan** to monitor progress and identify significant trends is a priority. We will ensure that there is a comprehensive data system in place following learners throughout their Welsh learning journey. The system will allow for the identification, analysis and reporting of patterns in order to plan purposefully and strategically for the future.

The Centre's new interactive site will help providers by facilitating registration, data input, communication with tutors, sharing of resources and good practice. We will be able to measure the impact of investment on learners and on the language and show how many of the non-Welsh speaking population take advantage of Welsh lessons. The Centre will be able to make a detailed analysis of learners locally and nationally - how they progress from one level to the next, their background and motivation, what they have achieved and what use they make of their Welsh.

Tutors are the cornerstone of the Centre's service for learners. The role of the tutor needs to be established as a recognised career option attractive to professional individuals of all ages. The Centre will be anxious to communicate with tutors regularly and invest in tutor resources and training. This is key in order that learners receive the best possible support and become fluent. In order to support tutors and prospective tutors, we will prepare a **Workforce Development Plan** which will set out the structure for recruitment, harmonise tutors' terms and conditions and set out a qualification and training framework to plan tutors' professional development, looking afresh at how competence is defined. We will look in detail at the content of the national qualification, and consider developing a new qualification to reflect the new curriculum and resources. The Centre will also consider other forms of qualification in order to attract as many able and dedicated individuals as possible to the profession.

# Actions

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## 2016 - 2017

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- ▲ Establish financial arrangements and agree performance and accountability indicators in order to set national targets, outputs and outcomes.
- ▲ Develop a sophisticated Data Management Plan through a new interactive site in order to ensure that the system for collection, storage and analysis of data is effective and efficient and to develop a national picture of the sector.
- ▲ Carry out detailed research on the nature of the workforce to analyse the current situation of tutors' terms and conditions of employment, tutors' qualifications, ratio of part- and full-time employees, and discover new ways of recruiting tutors.
- ▲ Carry out research on workforce competences, qualifications and training.
- ▲ Run and support training for tutors in the sector, including seminars and conferences at local, regional and national level.
- ▲ Recognise excellence and good practice in order to develop a National Quality Framework.

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## 2017 - 2020

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- ▲ Report on sector performance against key indicators and outputs year by year.
- ▲ Introduce and implement a National Quality Framework.
- ▲ Prepare a research-based Workforce Development Plan.
- ▲ Review the National Qualification reflecting the results of research and the requirements of the new curriculum.

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## 2020 - 2021

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- ▲ Continue with 2016-2020 objectives where applicable.
  - ▲ Implement the Workforce Development Plan whilst adapting it to the current situation.
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## Strategic Objective 4

### Raise the profile of the sector and increase the numbers who start courses and continue to learn Welsh

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Raising the profile of the sector is key to ensuring learning Welsh plays a prominent part in the success of the Welsh language. Communicating positive messages about learners and learning opportunities can lead to an increase in the numbers learning and continuing to learn Welsh.

Increasing the numbers beginning and continuing to learn Welsh is a priority for the Centre. This will be achieved by:

- ▲ developing a marketing and communication plan to become a visible institution;
- ▲ improving progression rates;
- ▲ developing a powerful interactive site; and
- ▲ creating powerful partnerships that raise the profile of the sector.

We will develop a **comprehensive marketing and communication plan** in co-operation with Welsh Government and providers to attract more people to learn Welsh and more people to continue with their courses. A clear brand will be developed for the Centre and its providers. The plan will suggest following specific themes as a framework for marketing activities and offer a programme of campaigns including recruitment, informal learning and progression. We will carry out high-quality research to identify possible audiences and draw up specific campaigns to attract them to learn.

The marketing and communication plan will reinforce work done with providers to develop a comprehensive programme of courses in response to local needs. We will identify specific groups of learners who will be targeted in the most appropriate manner. These groups are predicted to include parents, people who have learned and lost the language, people in work and people who are hard to reach. The latest marketing approaches will be used.

We will **improve progression rates** by better understanding learners' reasons for failing to continue the journey towards full fluency. By understanding these reasons we can develop suitable sub-campaigns to respond to the situation and measure impact quantitatively.

A **powerful multiplatform interactive site** will be developed as a focus for the sector's marketing and communication. This site will be the main point of contact for learners and prospective learners. The site will feature an online library of accessible resources and activities. The site will for the first time provide all Welsh learners with information on opportunities for learning and offer innovative interactive experiences. This may include an opportunity to engage with a virtual tutor and Welsh speakers, and to share experiences with other learners. The site address will be [dysgucymraeg.cymru](http://dysgucymraeg.cymru) or [learnwelsh.cymru](http://learnwelsh.cymru).

The Centre will also need to **create strong partnerships** with key bodies. We will ensure cooperation with external partners by setting up strategic partnerships and clear programmes of cooperation leading to an increase in the number of opportunities to learn and speak Welsh. The Centre will cooperate with policymakers, relevant agencies in all sectors and establish international partnerships. We will address policy developments in the post-16 education sector and respond appropriately. New partnerships will be set up offering an opportunity for the sector to be represented nationally for the first time with a view to setting out the sector's positive contribution to individuals and society.

# Actions

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## 2016 - 2017

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- ▲ Develop a marketing and communication plan including the creation of a recognised national brand.
- ▲ Carry out market research to identify new learning audiences.
- ▲ Run a series of recruitment campaigns following research-based specific themes.
- ▲ Build a powerful interactive site that meets the needs of learners and prospective learners, providers and tutors.
- ▲ Develop a programme of local marketing plans that promote courses and aim to increase progression rates.
- ▲ Secure the use of a range of communication and marketing techniques including social networks, presence at events and communication campaigns.

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## 2017 - 2020

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- ▲ Review and implement the marketing and communication plan.
- ▲ Respond to the market research by running campaigns that target specific sectors.
- ▲ Target specific areas based on market research and trends apparent in the data.
- ▲ Review the Centre's strategic partnerships.

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## 2020 - 2021

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- ▲ Continue with 2016-2020 objectives where applicable.
  - ▲ Plan marketing campaigns by setting national and local objectives and using the most appropriate platforms.
  - ▲ Appropriate promotion of courses within a rolling 12 month period.
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## Strategic Objective 5

### Establish and maintain service support procedures

The Centre respects what has already been achieved in the sector. For the first time ever, the Welsh for Adults sector is being led centrally by a national planning body. To operate successfully, the Centre will:

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- ▲ create effective governance;
- ▲ ensure appropriate use of public money;
- ▲ respond to the needs of learners, tutors and providers; and
- ▲ operate on the basis of research.

A priority for any new body is to ensure that its **governance** enables it to act effectively in terms of internal systems, to manage risk robustly and to use its resources prudently. To achieve this and to safeguard the interests of all sector stakeholders, a company has been established by guarantee with an experienced Board of Directors. The Centre will secure transparent and robust processes and systems in order to ensure **appropriate use of money**. The Centre will occasionally develop guidance to ensure consistency of provision across Wales. The Centre will monitor the efficiency of the financial investment and develop and support providers in ensuring that learners are the focus of all investment.

An Advisory Board has been established for the Centre's Company Board including members with various skills and experiences who will provide the Centre with expert advice.

In order to maintain high quality procedures, **learners, tutors and providers** will have regular opportunities to engage with the Centre. An annual study will be carried out to evaluate the experiences of learners, tutors and providers and we intend to act on the results. The study of learners' responses will be undertaken in consultation with providers and will include questions of common interest.

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We need to retain what works well and introduce new ideas. In order to ensure that learners succeed, the Centre sees itself as having a clear role in commissioning **research** to increase knowledge in the sector. As the Centre develops its Data Management Plan, we see a need for further research in some areas in order to lead to policy decisions. The research could be practical in nature and measure impact or deal with more intensive factors such as behavioural change. The Centre will also make use of comprehensive research already published.

The Centre is also aware of the need to give detailed consideration to international comparators in language learning, building on what has already worked well. The Centre will develop contacts with institutions in countries which have made good progress in introducing a language to new speakers.





# Actions

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## 2016 - 2017

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- ▲ Establish a robust, visible and accountable governance structure that leads change responsibly.
- ▲ Publish an annual report on expenditure and achievement.
- ▲ Introduce a standard method of gathering the opinions of learners, tutors and providers.
- ▲ Consider existing research and map further research areas.
- ▲ Develop international contacts with a view to sharing good practice.

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## 2017 - 2020

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- ▲ Secure and respond appropriately to internal and external inspections.
- ▲ Commission an increasing programme of research to identify and respond in a structured way to learner needs, based on robust evidence.
- ▲ Implement plans consistent with initiatives that have proved to be successful in other countries.
- ▲ Evaluate and measure the impact of the achievement of the Centre and its providers.

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## 2020 - 2021

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- ▲ Continue with 2016-2020 objectives where applicable.
  - ▲ Implement the Digital Framework and continue to innovate and deliver a range of opportunities for learners to engage in distance and online learning.
  - ▲ Evaluate and analyse data for the period to inform planning for future operations.
  - ▲ Maintain all the Centre's operations to support providers but using alternative means.
-