



Skills Policy

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1. Commitment to Skills and Gower College Swansea

- 1.1 Gower College Swansea is committed to providing opportunities for learners to develop their literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, employability and entrepreneurial skills so that learners progress beyond their level at entry to the College and gain external accreditation when relevant. These opportunities develop transferable skills that support learners to meet the demands of their programme of study, supports progression and provides the skills necessary for everyday life and to sustain employment. Development of these skills will give learners the competitive edge they need in today's competitive job market and challenging economy.

Skills 4 Progression

- 1.2 Gower College Swansea is committed to embedding skills through a "whole organisational approach" of assessment, delivery and support. Known cross college as Skills 4 Progression this incorporates Skills 4 literacy, numeracy, digital literacy and employability

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Skills 4 Progression curriculum includes a combination of the following as appropriate for each course and individual learner:
- Embedded opportunities for development of skills across all aspects of the curriculum
 - GCSE English Language, Welsh Language, Mathematics, Numeracy,
 - English-Matters and Maths-Matters for GCSE E-G grade learners
 - Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) - skills challenges
 - Enterprise activities
 - Work experience, College realistic work environments, voluntary/community work and other simulated work related activities.
 - English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) qualifications
 - WEST toolkit
 - Development of Welsh language skills
 - Other relevant literacy, numeracy, digital literacy and employability qualifications.
 - Essential Skills qualifications up to level 3 in:
 - Communication
 - Application of Number
 - Digital Literacy
 - Employability Skills

2.2 Additional support mechanisms for skills development include:

- Literacy and Numeracy support
- Dyslexia support
- On-course skill development
- Learning Support Assistant/Educational Support Officer input
- On-line learning materials
- Enterprise activities organised by the Enterprise Champion
- Study skills and general essential skills support available from the College Learning Resources Centers

3. Objectives

- 3.1 To accurately identify the learners' individual needs through the recruitment and assessment/diagnostic process.
- 3.2 To help learners overcome any barriers to learning, improve their confidence, attendance, retention and attainment.
- 3.3 To aim for learners to perform at a skill level which is appropriate for their programme of study.
- 3.4 To provide a flexible and bilingual network of support for the development of skills.
- 3.5 To develop bilingual delivery and assessment of the skills curriculum where staff skills exist and can be developed.
- 3.6 To ensure that effective strategies and resources are used to develop skills throughout the learning process for all learners.
- 3.7 To provide an appropriate skills curriculum as identified in the Learning Programme Directories or Work Based Learning Frameworks
- 3.8 To provide opportunities for learners to develop their skills on a part- time basis through Adult Basic Education (ABE) and ESOL programmes.
- 3.9 To ensure the provision of an effective staff development programme - Skills 4 Staff - for staff involved with the delivery and support of skills, including the embedding of literacy and numeracy, digital literacy and employability skills for all learner facing staff.
- 3.10 To monitor and evaluate the participation rates, outcomes and effectiveness of the skills curriculum delivery and support.

3.11 To provide support to staff in helping learners improve their skills in a range of different contexts eg accredited and non-accredited learning, blended and e-learning

4. Assessment of Learners' Skills Needs

4.1 Through the Skills 4 Progression programme, learners will undertake the Welsh Essential Skills Test (WEST) online prior to enrolment and in line with the Welsh Government WEST Implementation Policy. The results will be shared with staff to aid the embedding of skills development by all staff. The results of WEST will be in learners' eILPs and where appropriate additional support will be provided.

4.2 All ABE and ESOL students will have their skills assessed at an initial interview before starting their programme.

4.3 ILS students will be assessed via the ILS assessment tool that has been designed to meet their needs.

4.4 All full-time learners and Work Based Learners will undertake WEST to inform their eILP (ENGAGE) and begin the target setting process.

4.5 Starting with the September 2017 cohort, learners will complete activities in the WEST Toolkit, monitored by their tutor against eILP targets

4.6 All full time learners will complete the Enterprise Catalyst which provides an analysis of the learners' enterprise and employability skills and qualities.

4.7 All learners are encouraged to disclose their needs and discuss their requirements with appropriate staff.

5. Skills 4 Progression through Curriculum Delivery

5.1 All full-time learning programmes will include a range of opportunities to develop literacy, numeracy, digital literacy and employability skills as outlined in the Skills 4 Progression document.

5.2 Learners will initially aim to even out their spiky profile and then develop literacy, numeracy and digital literacy skills that are at least one level above that of their initial assessment.

5.3 Learners who have a Grade D in English Language (or Welsh language) and Numeracy will work to re-sit these GCSEs

- 5.4 Learners who have E, F or G GCSE in English and Numeracy will take an English-Matters or Maths-Matter course to build their skills in preparation for GCSE re-sit when they are ready. Where appropriate Level 1 learners will undertake Essential Skills at the most appropriate level.
- 5.5 For learners on pre-entry and entry level programmes (ILS) skills development should be embedded across their entire curriculum.
- 5.6 The skills curriculum will be fully embedded into the main programme of study and discrete sessions will be delivered in the context of the main programme of study.
- 5.7 The skills curriculum will be delivered by one of the following:
- suitably qualified essential skills specialists.
 - GCSE specialists (for GCSE qualifications)
 - Lecturers / assessors who have undertaken essential skills practitioner qualifications.
 - Lecturers / assessors who have undertaken Skills or WBQ awareness training and work with the guidance of skills specialists.
- 5.8 All staff involved with the delivery and assessment of skills must attend the relevant internal support network meetings.

6. Skills Support for Learners

6.1 For Identified Learners

Learners with a WEST result below level 1 will be offered additional literacy/numeracy support provided by specialist staff through a range of methods, such as:

- One to one support
- In class support
- On-line resources

This will be achieved by:

- Identifying individual barriers to learning.
- Providing a broad range of support tailored to the individual needs of the learner and recorded on the e-ILP.
- Negotiating individual learning plans with learners.
- Reviewing and evaluating learners' progress.
- Helping learners to produce meaningful action plans, review and set achievable targets.
- Providing on-going support and guidance for learners to progress.

6.2 For All Learners

As part of the focus on Skills 4 Progression, the College has set an expectation that all staff should be responsible for supporting the development of skills in all classes with all learners. This is supported by:

- The use of WEST tool kits supported by specific sections on the Teachers Zone, which provides a range of ideas and resources for staff.
- Consistency in marking and feedback.
- INSET activities to raise staff awareness of the importance of skills development and advice on embedding skills into course teaching.
- Involvement of the Teaching and Learning Team to help lecturers produce materials to support skills development, e.g. subject- specific desktop dictionaries and guidance on effective assignment writing.
- Communication of outcomes of initial assessment/diagnostic results to staff to inform strategies and differentiation.

Learners who have not been identified as requiring support by the initial assessment can access the support mechanisms through self or staff referral.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 *Vice Principal for Academic Services*: to lead on policy and strategic implications.
- 7.2 *Senior Curriculum Managers*: to ensure policy is implemented within curriculum areas and consistency applied.
- 7.3 *Skills Manager*: to lead on the development and implementation of the Skills Strategy, providing support and guidance as necessary.
- 7.4 *Operational Curriculum Managers*: to be responsible for the delivery and outcomes of Skills 4 Progression within their curriculum areas and promote the embedding of skills development by all delivery staff. To ensure initial screening and diagnostic testing is arranged and implement.
- 7.5 *Learner Support Manager*: to be responsible for the initial screening and diagnostic testing and ensuring identified students receive appropriate support.

- 7.6 *Essential Skills Coordinator*: to monitor the quality of assessment, to communicate curriculum changes, advise on delivery models and liaise with outside agencies and external verifiers.
- 7.7 *Quality Manager-Teaching and Learning Development*: to monitor skills development across the delivery of all courses and arrange appropriate CPD to support lecturing staff to implement skills development.
- 7.8 *Enterprise Champion*: to encourage and support the identification and delivery of opportunities to develop employability and entrepreneurial skills

8. Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

- 8.1 The Skills Manager will oversee the implementation of the skills policy and strategy and will provide regular updates to CQMG and other relevant committees.
- 8.2 The Essential Skills Co-ordinator will oversee the provision of essential skills curriculum across the College, providing a support and quality assurance mechanism and will provide yearly reports.
- 8.3 The appropriateness of the skills curriculum offer will be monitored by the curriculum planning process led by the Vice Principal for Academic Services
- 8.4 Skills 4 Progression will be a regular agenda item in Faculty management, College Quality Group and Curriculum/Quality Management Group meetings.
- 8.5 The outcomes of the skills curriculum will be monitored as part of the quality cycle alongside the main programme qualifications.
- 8.6 Learners' progress in skills will be monitored as part of the regular review of progress undertaken by the personal tutor.
- 8.7 The Learner Support Manager will complete a yearly report on the need, take up and effectiveness of specialist support.
- 8.8 The effectiveness of the embedded support provided by all delivery staff across all curriculum will be monitored via the quality cycle and the successful achievement of skills qualifications where delivered.

9. The Welsh Language

- 9.1 Mae Coleg Gŵyr Abertawe yn ymrwymedig i hyrwyddo'r iaith Gymraeg, yn unol â Safonau'r Iaith Gymraeg a Mesur y Gymraeg (Cymru) 2011.
- 9.2 Gower College Swansea is committed to the promotion of the Welsh language, in accordance with the Welsh Language Standards and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.