



The Welsh Bac Learning Community website

The Welsh Baccalaureate - or the Welsh Bac - is a new qualification which includes current, approved qualifications like A levels, GCSEs and NVQs and adds breadth and balance through a Core programme of activities.

In September 2003, eighteen schools and colleges began piloting the Welsh Bac. In September 2004 they were joined by six more schools and colleges and in September 2005 they were joined by a further seven. The pilot will last until August 2007 and later in 2006, informed by the results of the pilot, the Welsh Assembly Government will decide if the Welsh Bac should be offered across Wales.

The pilot schools and colleges are being supported by the Welsh Bac Project Team, which spent the first two years of the pilot developing the specification for the Welsh Bac and helping the pilot schools and colleges prepare for its introduction in September 2003.

In 2004, as an attempt to help teachers and lecturers in the various pilot centres to share their experiences and materials, ELWa commissioned the production for a CD ROM of resources gathered from centres and other organisations across Wales.

In 2005, the Project Team agreed with the Wales Assembly Government that an intranet should be set up and developed which would build on this work, and further enhance cooperation and sharing of resources and experiences among Welsh Bac colleagues.

The intranet - the Welsh Bac Learning Community - was launched in April 2006.

A quick tour

Its title - the Welsh Bac Learning Community - encapsulates its main aim - to strengthen and enhance the links which are developing amongst staff delivering the WBQ as they meet at information and training events, and to facilitate the exchange of valuable experiences, ideas and resources.

To do this, the site offers:

- **information** on the Welsh Bac
- **resources** to help deliver the curriculum
- **information on the assessment** of the Welsh Bac
- **contact details** for other Welsh Bac teachers
- **descriptions of activities** in other centres
- a **forum** where issues can be discussed with other teachers or members of the Project Team

Reference

The information, or Reference section, provides:

- all the resources needed to understand the Specification for the Welsh Bac (the Handbook)
- the latest information from the Project Team
- PowerPoint materials developed for use in training or to impart information about the qualification
- marketing materials e.g. leaflets in pdf format, useful logos for use in a centre's own materials
- administration resources e.g. information on moderation arrangements, administrative forms



Resources

This section offers a wide range of resources useful for delivering the Welsh Bac.

- Examples of good practice supplied by the Welsh Bac Project Team
- A selection of resources contributed by Welsh Bac centres
- The ELWa-funded WBQ Resources CD
- Links to organisations with useful resources to offer

At present, the resources collected for the CD Rom provides the most populated part of this section and this provides a base on which to build. Users are encouraged to send resources for uploading. These might take the form of carefully constructed case studies, reports on activities undertaken or even simply good ideas.

The Welsh Bac Project Team has started the ball rolling by contributing a selection of materials:

- examples of Individual Investigations for teachers to evaluate, with official moderators' comments for comparison
- Guidelines on developing investigative skills for teachers and students
- WJEC guidance and advice on Key Skills.

We are also liaising with any organisations in the public or private sector that have valuable resources, in terms of materials or services, to offer.

News

The news section reports on any developments affecting the roll out of the Welsh Bac, but also provides news about activities emanating from centres, e.g. presentations at conferences, awards achieved.

Feedback

A form is provided which invites comment on any aspect of the site. A form which will invite users to submit good ideas is also in the planning stage.

Forum

It is envisaged that users can raise any issues and concerns in this area, and instigate useful discussions.

Search

The site has a search facility so that information can be found quickly and easily.

Future developments

Work is underway to promote the use of the intranet amongst Welsh Bac colleagues. To do this, the Project Team is seeking to raise awareness of the content on the intranet, and how it can be used to work more effectively. Also, we are seeking to develop ongoing communication with users to ensure that concerns and suggestions are fully considered. Present efforts are focused on efforts to gather information and resources both from Welsh Bac practitioners and from a wide range of organisations, both in public and private sectors, to make the Welsh Back Learning Community site as rich a repository of materials as possible.

In future, information, reports and forms will be referred to in e-mails to the user group, but the materials will be located on the intranet. It is planned in this way to encourage people to visit the site, to find useful information and resources, and thus hopefully be inspired to contribute to it themselves in turn. The site will be judged successful when users take over ownership and make it their own, both in contributing ideas and materials, but also using it as a mechanism for getting in touch with each other, and discussing salient issues.

Consideration has been given from the outset to the needs of the user group. The Project Team has been aided in setting up the intranet by a Working Group drawn from various Welsh Bac centres. This group will continue to inform the work of its future development. Comment and feedback from all users is sought, primarily from the online Feedback section, but also from responses at various meetings.