

**WELSH BACCALAUREATE
QUALIFICATION**

ADVANCED DIPLOMA

**HOW DID THE SECOND EXAMINATION
(2004-06) CYCLE GO?**

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INTRODUCTION

This Report, *'How did the Second Examination (2004-06) Cycle Go?'* follows the style adopted by the first Report produced in 2005 and has the same aims, to provide:

- information about how successful the candidates were who followed the overarching WBQ Advanced Award achieved in this, the second full examination cycle; and
- advice on those parts of the WBQ programme that were successful and those that require attention.

The WBQ Project Team suggests that the broad messages contained within this Report are best considered in discussions with teachers. Accordingly, the main findings provided the framework for the feedback meetings held in north, south-west and south-east Wales during the middle part of the autumn term, 2006. An important part of these meetings were the workshops, during which teachers considered these issues in the context of examples of candidates' work. To gain the full advantages from this Report, it should be read alongside the examples which are circulated to all WBQ centres.

The Report is based upon information derived from a variety of sources, in particular:

- candidates' prior attainment at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 (GCE or equivalent);
- statistics and work submitted for the 2006 Advanced Award;
- Moderators' Reports;
- a range of data generated by questionnaires and centre visits.

The Project Team believes that the most important participants in the development of the WBQ are the teachers and their candidates, and it is hoped that the Report will provide them with useful information as they prepare for the next phase of the WBQ.

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October 2006

1. WHAT IS THE WELSH BACCALAUREATE?

What is it?

The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) is a post-16 over-arching qualification that currently recognises candidate achievement at levels 2 and 3 of the National Qualifications Framework (NVQ).

The programme of study is made up of a Core and Options. The Core has four components:

- Key skills
- Wales, Europe and the World (WEW)
- Work-related Education (WRE)
- Personal and Social Education (PSE).

The Options are the subjects and courses such as GCE, AVCE, NVQ and BTEC that make up a candidates' complete programme of study.

In addition, all candidates work with a personal tutor who provides overall support and guidance.

What do candidates have to do to achieve the Advanced Diploma?

Candidates who complete all parts of the WBQ (Core and Options) at the required standard are awarded the Welsh Baccalaureate Diploma at either level 2 (Intermediate) or level 3 (Advanced). The assessment requirements for the Advanced Diploma, including both the Core and the Options, are:

Core	Options
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three key skills at level 3, one of which must be from the first three key skills together with the other key skills at level 2.• Records/reports of Working with an Employer, Team Enterprise Activity, and Community Participation.• Individual Investigation at level 3.• Evidence of work on the Language Module.	Two grades A-E at GCE Advanced or NVQ Level 3 or BTEC National Certificate at pass level or equivalent.

This report gives information about how the candidates following this over-arching Advanced level qualification performed in its second full 'live' cycle and, in the process, aims to provide teachers with advice on those parts of the programme that were successful and those that require attention.

2. HOW MANY CANDIDATES SAT THE WBQ? HOW DID THEY DO?

The Entry

A few facts about what was achieved (note: figures in brackets throughout this report are those for the 2003-2005 cycle).

- The total 'entry' for the Advanced Diploma in 2006 was 835 (499), of whom 635 or 76% completed the programme (299 or 60%). The 'entry' figures represent the number of candidates aiming at an Advanced Baccalaureate Award this year, as indicated by 10 schools and 11 colleges at February 2006. 559 candidates were awarded the WBQ Advanced Diploma, being 88% of the 635 who completed the programme (255 or 85.3%).
- A further 28 (17) candidates were awarded the WBQ Advanced Core Certificate. This in itself represents a very significant achievement by these candidates, including all 6 key skills. However, at this stage they have fallen short of the full Diploma Award through not having met the Options requirement (i.e. A level/NVQ level 3 or equivalent). Therefore a total of 587 (272) candidates achieved the Core Certificate, being 92% (91%) of the 635 who completed the programme.
- The remaining 48 candidates have achieved an average of 3 key skills qualifications each, but did not achieve the Diploma, having fallen short on the full range of requirements. The cumulative nature of the WBQ means that if these candidates achieve the remaining parts of the Qualification in the coming academic year, they may choose to enter again for the Advanced Diploma in 2007.

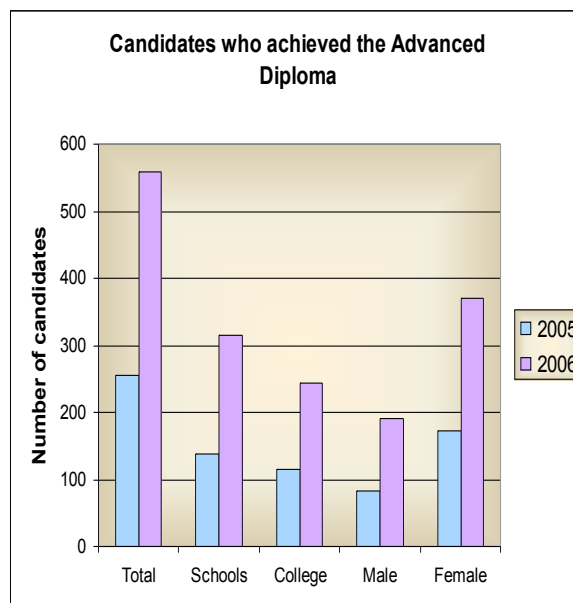
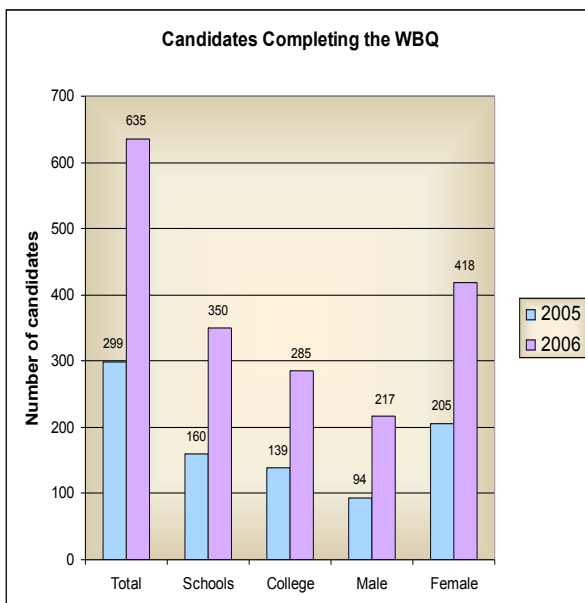
Did the candidates come from schools or colleges?

The candidates entered for the Advanced Diploma in 2006 were based in 10 schools and 11 colleges involved in the pilot. The aggregate distribution by school/college and by gender for candidates completing the programme, and for those awarded the Diploma, are shown in Table 1 below.

Candidates	Total	Schools	Colleges	Male	Female
Completing the WBQ	635 (299) 76% (59%)	350 (160) 55% (54%)	285 (139) 45% (46%)	217 (94) 34% (31%)	418 (205) 66% (69%)
Awarded Advanced Diploma	559 (255) 88%(85%)	316 (139) 57% (55%)	243 (116) 43% (45%)	190 (82) 34% (32%)	369 (173) 66% (68%)

**Table 1:
completion and achievement**

Of the 635 candidates completing the Baccalaureate programme, 588 or 93% (202 - 68%) applied for entry to higher education.



Why did some candidates not complete the WBQ Programme?

As part of the evaluation of the pilot programme, teachers were asked to give the probable reasons why the 200 candidates in the overall 'entry' of 835 did not complete the programme. The most common reasons for non-completion relate to the following (Table 2):

3% (11%) indicated that the candidates wished to defer until 2007.
 1.5% (4%) indicated that they had left their school or college for employment.

16% (34%) of the candidates 'entered' did not complete the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma but remained in the school or college to complete their other programmes of study. The two major reasons for their not completing the Advanced Diploma indicated by this group of candidates were difficulty in completing:

- (a) the key skills requirements (52.5%);
- (b) the Individual Investigation (45.8%);
- (c) the Option programmes (1.7%).

It was suggested that no candidates appeared to have difficulty completing the Core curriculum requirements.

**Table 2:
reasons for non-completion**

However, a clear majority of non-completing candidates continued successfully with much of their programme of study, albeit not fulfilling the complete demands of the Advanced Diploma.

3. HOW 'ABLE' WERE THE CANDIDATES WHO SAT THE WBQ?

Information was obtained about the prior achievement of candidates at Key Stage 3 and GCSE, or equivalent, for those who completed the two-year WBQ Advanced programme in 2006 and for those who did not. The data were analysed in terms of:

- total entry;
- males and females;
- schools and colleges.

Candidates who completed the WBQ programme

These numbered 635 candidates, of whom 217 were male and 418 were female. 350 followed the WBQ programme in schools and 285 in colleges.

The data show the scores of all the candidates in Mathematics, English, Science and Welsh at Key Stage 3 and in GCSE or equivalent courses.

Key Stage 3

Schools: 349 candidates: mean level – 6.1 (national average 5)

Maths			English			Science			Welsh		
Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females
6.2	6.2	6.1	6.0	5.7	6.2	6.1	6.0	6.1	6.1	5.9	6.1

Colleges: 285 candidates: mean level – 5.6

Maths			English			Science			Welsh		
Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females
5.5	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.2	5.3	5.9	5.7	5.9

Table 3:

KS3 scores in schools and colleges

- the mean level at KS3, 5.9, was higher than the national average, 5.0;
- the mean level achieved in schools was 6.1, virtually the same as in 2005. The mean level in colleges was slightly lower, 5.6, but this was also marginally higher than that for 2005, 5.3;
- attainment was comparable across the four subjects in schools and colleges.

GCSE, COEA, GNVQ

Schools: mean GCSEs – 9.1

GCSE	COEA	GNVQ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean number of GCSEs: 9.1 • 0.4% had less than 4 A*-C • no candidate failed to obtain at least 1 GCSE • 85.2% achieved 8 or more GCSEs 	2 candidates had COEA, both achieving 1 subject pass	22 candidates had GNVQ in ICT or Health and Social Care

Colleges: mean GCSEs – 7.7

GCSE	COEA	GNVQ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean number of GCSEs: 7.7 • 0.8% had less than 4 A*-C • 7 candidates failed to obtain at least 1 GCSE • 66.2% achieved 8 or more GCSEs 	39 (18.8%) candidates had COEA, with a mean of 1.3 subject passes	12 candidates (11 females, 1 male) had GNVQs in Business, Health and Social Care, ICT, Leisure and Tourism, Leisure Level 1

Table 4:
GCSE, COEA, GNVQ scores in schools

- the difference between schools and colleges increases from KS3 to GCSE or equivalent;
- there is a significant difference in attainment in GCSE between the schools and colleges, (schools 9.1, colleges 7.7);
- this contrast is carried through to a number of other features, such as (a) the percentage achieving 8 or more GCSEs (schools 85.2%, colleges 66.2%), (b) the number with COEAs ranging from 2 candidates with this qualification in schools to 39 or 18.8% in colleges, and (c) the number of candidates who successfully completed GNVQs.

Candidates who did not complete the WBQ programme

The data relating to this group of 200 candidates are as follows:

Key Stage 3

Schools: 109 candidates: mean level – 5.7 (national average 5)

Maths			English			Science			Welsh		
Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females
5.6	5.7	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.4	5.7	5.8	5.8	6.1	5.9	6.1

Colleges: 91 candidates: mean level – 5.4

Maths			English			Science			Welsh		
Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females	Overall	Males	Females
5.4	5.8	2.3	5.4	5.4	5.3	6.3	4.0	7.0	5.9	5.7	5.9

Table 5:
KS3 scores in schools and colleges – non-completers

These figures suggest that candidate attainment at KS3 for both schools and colleges was marginally lower for this group than for those who completed the WBQ

GCSE, COEA, GNVQ

Schools: 110 candidates: mean GCSEs – 8.5

GCSE	COEA	GNVQ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean number of GCSEs: 8.5 • 11.1% had less than 4 A*-C • 4.8% of candidate failed to obtain at least 1 	No candidates had COEA	3 candidates had GNVQ in ICT or Leisure & Tourism

GCSE • 67.5% achieved 8 or more GCSEs	
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Colleges: 91 candidates: mean GCSEs – 5.0

GCSE	COEA	GNVQ
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean number of GCSEs: 5.0 • 27.2% had less than 4 A8-C • 9.9% of candidates failed to obtain at least 1 GCSE • 36.4% achieved 8 or more GCSEs 	2 candidates had COEA, each with 1 subject pass.	10 candidates had GNVQs in Health and Social care, ICT, Leisure and Tourism, and Engineering

Table 6: GCSE, COEA, GNVQ scores in schools and colleges

Again, the non-completers were not as successful as those who completed the full programme.

What general conclusions can be drawn from this data?

- The Key Stage 3 data suggest that the whole cohort (completers and non-completers) achieved slightly above average (level 5) scores, with those who completed the programme achieving slightly better scores. Within this pattern there were small differences in achievement between male/female and school/college. Candidates appeared to do about the same in Maths, Science and English. Attainment in Welsh was slightly better than that in English.
- There were more significant differences between the various scores when candidates had progressed to GCSE or equivalent. For example, there were differences in the number of subjects passed between the completers and non-completers, whilst the number of 4 GCSEs/equivalent passed showed a significant difference.
- Generally, those candidates who completed the WBQ programme appear to be the type of candidates at whom GCE and its equivalent are targeted, and so, it is anticipated that they would be able to cope with the demands of the Advanced Diploma. The non-completing group, however, may have encountered initial learning difficulties or other problems.

4. WHAT OPTIONS COURSES DID CANDIDATES FOLLOW?

It was suggested in Section 3 that the entry for the 2004-06 Advanced Diploma was generally typical of the whole post-16 cohort in schools and colleges. The question then arises as to the extent to which this becomes reality when we consider the programmes and courses these candidates followed. The data below again, show the pattern overall, together with that for male/female and school/college.

Overall entry (%)

GCE/AVCE/BTEC	
GCE	70.6% (71.5)
AVCE/BTEC	20.4% (27.5)
GCE and AVCE	9.0%.(1.0)
Of these, 69.9% (77.8%) of the GCEs were delivered in the schools and 93.5% (95.1%) of the AVCEs/BTECs were delivered in the colleges.	

Table 7: overall entries for Options

Of the total entry for the Advanced Diploma, 65.6% (65.4%) were female and 34.4% (34.6%) male. There was a less clear and changing division in entry between schools and colleges, with 56.4% (62.9%) in schools and 43.6% (37.1%) in colleges, indicating a change in patterns of entry.

Clearly, the programmes followed are dominated by

- the continuing high percentage of candidates following GCE courses;
- the continuing concentration of vocational (AVCEs) programmes within the colleges;
- the small but significant move to candidates combining GCE and AVCE/BTEC programmes.

Courses/programmes followed (%)

GCE Courses

Tables 8(a) and (b) below show the 10 most popular GCE subjects studied.

(as a percentage of the total subject entry)		
English	11.8% (10.5)	(Lang/Lit/Lang&Lit)
History	10.6% (10.9)	
Biology	8.1% (9.8)	
Maths	7.6%.(6.8)	
Geography	6.5% (5.8)	
Business&Economics	4.7% (2.3)	
Chemistry	4.2% (5.7)	
Sociology	4.2% (4.3)	
Media&Film	4.1% (2.1)	
Computing&ICT	3.8% (9.0)	

**Table 8(a):
the ten most popular GCE subjects studied**

The remaining 34.4% of candidates followed courses based upon 19 other GCE subjects.

In addition, 4.3% of the cohort followed one year AS courses in Year 12 not leading to a full A level, the main results of which were as follows:

General Studies	59.3% (82.5%)
Law	18.5% (1.5%)
Psychology	11.1% (1.3%)
Media/Film Studies	7.4% (1.8%)

**Table 8(b):
entry for main GCE AS subjects**

AVCE Programmes

Of the candidates following vocational programmes:

56.9% (84%) were entered for AVCEs, 37.6% (18.4%) for BTEC, and 5.5% for CACHE. In more detail:

- AVCE - 45.3% were entered for the 12 Unit Double Award and 54.7% for the 6 Unit Single Award;
- BTEC – 4.3% were entered for the BTEC National Award, 22.8% for the BTEC National Certificate, and 72.9% for the BTEC National Diploma.

The most popular programmes followed in each of these Awards are shown in Tables 9(a), (b) and (c).

BTEC Award	% of total Award entry
Health and Social Care	45.8
Business	29.2
Travel and Tourism	16.6
Hospitality and Catering	4.2
ICT	2.1
Performing Arts	2.1

**Table 9(a):
AVCE 12 Unit Awards**

BTEC Award	% of total Award entry
Health and Social Care	43.1
IT	32.7
Business	10.3
ICT	5.2
Travel & Tourism	3.4
Performing Arts	3.4
Media: Communication & Production	1.9

**Table 9(b):
AVCE 6 Unit Awards**

Accordingly, the most popular **overall** AVCE programmes were:

AVCE 12 and 6 unit Award	% of total Award entry
Health and Social Care	44.3 (20)
Business	18.9 (41.7)
Travel and Tourism	9.4 (21.4)
ICT	3.8 (13.1)
Performing Arts	2.8 (1.2)
Hospitality and Catering	2.1

**Table 9(c):
Total AVCE Unit Awards**

Of those candidates entered for the various BTEC National Awards (Award, Certificate and Diploma) the main programmes followed were (Table 10):

BTEC Award	% of total Award entry
Business	34.2

IT	25.7
Travel and Tourism	9.4
Care	3.8
Public Services	5.7
Sport	5.7

**Table 10:
BTEC programmes**

Even though it is clear that most schools and colleges currently make little attempt to integrate GCE and AVCE/BTEC in individual candidate programmes, it should be noted that there has been a small shift towards greater integration of programmes, with an increase from 7.4% in 2003-05 to 9.0% in 2004-06. Again, these draw largely upon the following combinations:

- GCE Media Studies and AVCE Business, and
- GCE History/Geography and AVCE Travel and Tourism.

5. HOW DID CANDIDATES DO IN THE WBQ CORE?

Now that we know something about the prior achievement of the 2004-06 WBQ cohort, together with information about their programmes of study, it is time to look in some detail at how well the candidates did in the various Core components and the Options. So, this section considers attainment in the WBQ Core, and the following section, Section 6, attainment in the Options. Candidate attainment in the Core is considered under 3 headings:

- the Key Skills;
- the Individual Investigation;
- the Diaries/Verification statements.

KEY SKILLS

The results of candidate performance in the key skills part of the WBQ Core are shown in Table 11 below. These statistics are then related to the national attainment levels in key skills as shown in the '*Statistical Bulletin*' issued by the Statistical Directorate of the National Assembly for Wales, 27 June 2006.

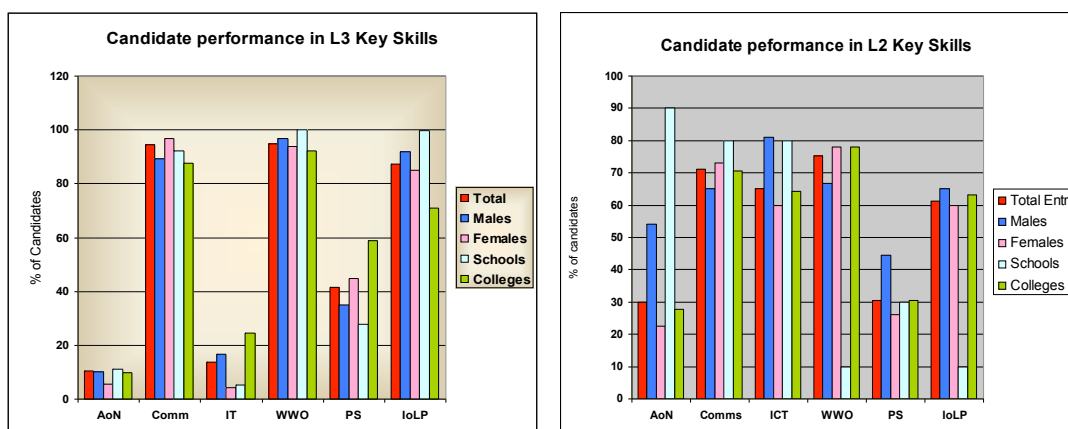
Key Skill	Total Entry			Males			Females			School			College		
	3	2	F	3	2	F	3	2	F	3	2	F	3	2	F
Communication	94.4	5.6	0.0	89.4	10.6	0.0	96.8	3.2	0.0	92.3	7.7	0.0	87.5	12.5	0.0
Application of Number	10.4	89.4	0.2	10.0	89.7	0.3	5.6	94.1	0.3	11.1	88.9	0.0	9.7	89.9	0.4
ICT	13.6	86.4	0.0	16.8	83.2	0.0	4.3	95.7	0.0	5.1	94.9	0.0	24.6	75.4	0.0
Working with Others	94.9	5.1	0.0	96.9	3.1	0.0	93.9	6.1	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	92.1	7.1	0.0
Problem Solving	41.6	58.4	0.0	35.1	64.9	0.0	44.8	55.2	0.0	27.9	72.1	0.0	58.7	41.3	0.0
Improving Own Learning	87.4	12.6	0.0	91.8	8.2	0.0	84.9	14.8	0.3	99.7	0.3	0.0	71.1	28.5	0.4

**Table 11:
key skills attainment in the WBQ by gender and school/college**

Key: 3 = Level 3; 2 = Level 2; F = Fail at either level 2 or 3

The following points are highlighted by the table:

- The majority of centres and candidates targeted Communication 94.4% (93.2%), Working with Others 94.9% (81.9%) and Improving Own Learning and Performance 87.4% (71.7%) for their three level 3s.
- Achievement at level 3 in Application of Number 10.4% (6.9%) and ICT 13.6% (18.0%) was disappointing.
- Most of the candidates achieved the required 6 key skills, with only a small percentage failing in any particular skill.
- Significant differences emerge between males and females in ICT and Problem Solving.
- Differences between schools and colleges were more significant in ICT, Problem Solving and IOLP.
- Generally, there was a change in the pattern of centres' 'level 3 entry', with the preferred choice now being Communication, Working with Others and IOLP.



What about these key skills results in relation to those for candidates in Wales, as a whole? The national figures are:

- Over 168,000 key skills were awarded to approximately 85,700 learners between October 2000 and September 2005, with an average per learner of 1.9.
- 85,294 key skills qualifications were awarded in Wales between October 2004 and September 2005. This was an increase from 30,786 awards in 2003/04.
- In 2004/05, the percentage of key skills qualifications awarded in Wales were:

at Level 1, 47%;

at Level 2, 42%;
at Level 3, 11%..

This compares with the following figures for the WBQ:

at Level 1, 10.1%
at Level 2, 45.8%
at Level 3, 38.4%
Unsuccessful, 5.7%

- In 2004/05, at a National level:

28% of key skills awards were in Communication
22% were in Application of Number
20% were in IT
12% were in IOLP
12% were in Working with Others
7% were in Problem Solving.

- For the WBQ, **all six key skills were achieved by 94.3% of the entry**, with only a small percentage failing in each key skill.
- Nationally, 22,200 individuals have achieved three or more key skills since October 2000, nearly all of these aged 16 or over. This is **13.1%** of the total entry. For the **WBQ, 99.6%** of the entry achieved three or more key skills.

These two sets of statistics show very clearly the extent to which the WBQ has facilitated the achievement of more and a broader range of key skills than with non-WBQ candidates nationally.

THE INDIVIDUAL INVESTIGATION – Principal Moderator’s Report

Many candidates produced Individual Investigations of a very high standard. The work was interesting, varied, relevant and within the spirit of the WBQ. The choice of illustrative material was broadly suitable, manageable and appropriate to Level 3. The main features of the Individual Investigations submitted by candidates were:

- The standard was generally very good.
- The majority of candidates responded enthusiastically to their chosen titles and took the opportunity this work offered to use a wide range of skills.
- At the highest level the confidence of candidates in their ability to handle their chosen topics was gratifying to see.
- The range of Investigations undertaken reflected the diverse interests of the candidates. Powerpoint presentations with speaking notes helped to clarify and confirm judgments. Issues such as obesity and teen pregnancy stood alongside equally challenging investigations into aspects of legal systems and human rights in Wales and other countries.
- The level of communication was generally appropriate to level 3.

- Investigations were relevant and largely issue based. Those that linked local knowledge to another dimension were largely successful.
- Excellent ICT skills were evident and helped provide ideal vehicles and contexts for each of the Investigations.
- Many Investigations were often based on social issues. Candidates had obviously worked very hard and produced much good quality work.
- In the better presentations, use was made of both primary and secondary data.
- The assessment of the Individual Investigation was generally consistent throughout. It was pleasing to note how some candidates responded to the early advice offered by their mentor/tutor.
- In most centres there was clear evidence of internal moderation throughout the investigations.
- Some Investigations included questionnaires and other surveys of primary data. These often varied in focus, scope and effectiveness.

A number of more detailed comments may be made about the nature and assessment of the Investigations.

Skills and techniques

The use of **maps and diagrams** was usually appropriate and gave Investigations a sense of place and context. In the best examples, **annotation** was used to explain and to help evaluate a map or diagram. **Statistics** were included to varying degrees. At best they were effectively integrated into the text and were not included as a 'bolt on' simply to satisfy the assessment criteria. Some of the best examples were derived from primary data and the use of questionnaires that had been effectively compiled and represented. A range of **graphs** was often introduced and linked to the text. In the better Investigations they were seen as an opportunity to introduce observation and evaluation. Where used, **tabulated data** were relevant and added to the Investigations. It was good to see the inclusion of **primary data** - it adds to the quality of the work and was a valuable source of information from which both to illustrate techniques, and help candidates arrive at valid evaluations and conclusions. Several candidates undertook simple questionnaires, but sometimes did not take the opportunity to display the results to maximum effect. A number of candidates made appropriate use of '**open ended questions**' in their questionnaires that allowed them to pick up items of specific interest.

Knowledge

The **information** included in the majority of Investigations was appropriate and contemporary and derived from a wide range of sources. Good and relevant use

was made of **internet research** in the majority of Investigations. The selection and use of **appropriate** knowledge and information are important skills. However, some candidates introduced too many perspectives and these detracted from the clarity and evaluation of the Investigations. Systematic treatment of the information was evident in an organised and planned manner from the majority of candidates.

Understanding

Understanding was demonstrated to varying degrees. It was evident that the majority of candidates had worked hard, enthusiastically, had benefited from the experience, and were able to **apply knowledge meaningfully and use skills appropriately**. Some candidates were good at describing but less confident in giving **explanations** or indeed the **causes and consequences of material** included. This is a high level, skill but is important in evidencing understanding, particularly at Level 3.

Evaluation and conclusions

It was evident that the majority of candidates had benefited from undertaking their Investigations and had improved **their ability to arrive at clear opinions and judgements**. **Conclusions** were usually meaningful and **addressed the titles**, with the best ones based on both a consideration of the information included and on **personal research** (questionnaire and personal observation). Some conclusions were a little brief and simplistic and for some of the weaker candidates, there was an over reliance on personal comment and opinion rather than on **documented information and reference to knowledge and data included earlier in the Investigation**. In addition to a formal conclusion there was, from the more able candidates, attempts at **personal reflection and evaluation**, often throughout the Investigation, for example in relation to graphs, diagrams, photographs etc. In many Investigations, however, it is clear that this criterion still needs further work. **Candidates need to be made aware that evaluation and reflection are essential requirements for success at Level 3.**

Some further observations on the Individual Investigation

Titles

A wide range of original and individual titles was seen. These reflected the diverse range of Options followed by candidates, but also their personal interest areas. Such a range of titles is entirely appropriate and within the spirit of the WBQ. As a general rule, titles that are 'hypothesis' or 'question based' tend to be the most effective. In the best examples, candidates 'kept on track' and constantly returned to the title in their evaluation and conclusion section, and were able to gain full credit against the assessment criteria. The advice to candidates is to **keep titles simple and avoid over complexity**.

The 'Wales Perspective' and use of the 'wider' scale

These were generally appropriate. The most effective approach is where the candidate selects an **issue for study** and **illustrates** its nature, problems and

features with **appropriate examples** drawn from Wales and from another part of the world or at a different scale outside Wales. This is more appropriate than using multiple comparisons that often confuse candidates and take them off at tangents.

THE DIARIES/VERIFICATION STATEMENTS

- Generally, the management and organisation of the diaries allowed the moderator to move from WEW to WRE to PSE etc. with ease.
- Clear completion of WB2 forms and additional overviews were provided, which were helpful. Some candidates used the Welsh language as part of their record keeping and this fitted naturally into the spirit of the recording process. A few candidates kept their records in Welsh and English and moved easily from one language to the other.
- All the required documentation was present and included the signatures required for verification. Most diaries had been through a clear and consistent internal moderation process.
- The Language Module was well documented and most candidates were able to show progress in their chosen language. The languages studied included Spanish, German, Japanese and Sign Language. The necessary evaluation had usually taken place following the Language Module. These were normally accompanied by teacher verifications.
- PSE was usually effectively logged and evaluated by the candidates. All key issues had been covered within WEW and PSE. Community Participation was once again effective and there was evidence that the candidates had enjoyed it. The choice and range of activities were both interesting and impressive. It often tied in effectively with the key skill of WWO.
- WRE was well evidenced. Some candidates had undertaken an internet business challenge. The range of placements undertaken and evidence base were sound with all external verifications in place. They were thorough and candidate-evaluated.
- There is evidence that key skills are becoming embedded within learning programmes. There is consistency in assessment.

A check list of positive features

- Generally impressive standards seen across Wales.
- Significant improvements upon last year.
- There was evidence of formative assessment and of centres/candidates acting on it.
- The work was, on balance, accurately assessed and there was ample evidence of how and why an assessment was made, often using proforma and additional comments on the work.
- Individual Investigations were generally good. Issues such as obesity and teen pregnancy stood alongside challenging Investigations into the aspects of legal systems and human rights in Wales and other countries. Some included

questionnaires and other surveys of primary data which varied in effectiveness of focus and scope.

- Many Investigations included questionnaires and the results were deployed in a variety of ways. Some of the questionnaires perhaps needed a little more thought (about scope, purpose, nature of questions etc).
- Candidate records relevant to the WBQ Core components were contained in well-presented, individually bound and relevant folios.
- Diary records for PSE and WEW key issues were clear and well organized, indicating that a good range of learning opportunities and experiences had been given to the candidates. Generally impressive, well-researched and presented work.
- Assessment was generally consistent, accurate and efficiently carried out. An example of good practice was the assessment proforma included with a few of the Investigations, with comments on skills, knowledge, understanding, evaluation etc. It would be a good idea to integrate these into the assessment of all Investigations. This would help the internal assessment and enable the moderator to see how and why judgments were made. Internal moderation had usually taken place.

Areas of Concern

- Investigations from a number of centres were accurately assessed and contained detailed marking/comments by the teacher - BUT there was, sometimes, no evidence of internal moderation.
- Some centres provided limited marking/comments. Often, there was no overall indication as to how the centre had come to its decision or evidence of internal moderation.
- Where candidate work was a bare pass or indeed failed, there was a greater need for more support in terms of feedback. Candidates had undoubtedly worked very hard indeed. They had concentrated on key issues and investigated these thoroughly, exploring the causes, extent and impact in general terms. They often also concluded with a short written evaluation. Several investigations were also ill served by a lack of demonstrated skills and techniques. Further guidance in terms of feedback is likely to be successful in addressing these points.
- One challenging issue for Co-ordinators is the problem of 'courses and campuses'. For example, the sharing of good practice is often difficult across campuses. One area where improvement may be made is the clarification of documentation. It might help to adopt a common format for the various diary records without losing any desirable individuality etc.
- Many of the candidates phrased their work as 'An investigation about.....' These would benefit from a tighter focus, probably based around a strong key question.
- Signatures on some diaries - some brief explanation/comments in terms of endorsement would enhance this process.
- These points aside, candidates from the vast majority of centres are clearly enjoying what they are doing and on the whole doing it well.

Conclusions

- Centres largely follow the guidance given in the Specification, especially on assessment objectives. Candidates had generally worked enthusiastically and had benefited from the exercise.
- Ironically, in some instances candidates had failed to get the full award because key skills were either missing or insufficiently robust to meet external qualification, yet some of the work and evidence contained within the diaries, particularly in Team Enterprise and Community Participation, could, with a relatively small amount of guidance from the tutor, have met the requirements of the wider key skills. This was therefore clearly a case of opportunities lost, demonstrating the need for coordinators to ‘work smarter’ where appropriate learning opportunities naturally emerge.
- In summary, it is thought that overall standards had improved and that tutors had a greater understanding of candidate potential and as a result are more confident about making appropriate and accurate judgements.

6. HOW DID THEY DO IN THEIR OPTIONS?

The other assessed part of the WBQ is located in the candidates’ Options courses and programmes. This largely consists of two possible routes – the ‘academic’ or ‘general’ (GCE) and the ‘vocational’ (AVCE, BTEC, etc.). However, in a small number of cases, candidates combined courses drawn from both routes. The results show the following:

Overall results

- % Core pass: 587/635 = 92% (91%)
- % Diploma pass 559/635 = 88% (78.7%)

A detailed breakdown of candidate achievement in GCE and AVCE awards is given in Tables 12(a) and 12(b) that follow.

Results by gender, school/college

Grade	Total Entry	Females	Males	School	College
A	25.6 (19.0)	25.6 (22.0)	25.8 (23.4)	30.8 (23.6)	11.8 (6.7)
B	27.9 (23.7) 53.5 (42.7)	28.7 (28.9) 54.3 (50.9)	26.3 (19.9) 52.1 (43.3)	29.6 (26.1) 60.4 (49.7)	23.7 (17.1) 35.5 (23.8)
C	23.8 (30.7) 77.3 (73.4)	23.5 (27.8) 77.8 (78.7)	24.4 (28.8) 76.5 (72.1)	20.6 (27.3) 81.0 (77.0)	32.2 (39.6) 67.7 (63.4)
D	14.8 (18.2) 92.1 (91.6)	14.7 (15.5) 92.5 (94.2)	15.2 (17.4) 87.3 (89.5)	12.4 (15.4) 93.4 (92.4)	21.3 (25.6) 89.0 (89.0)
E	5.7 (6.7) 97.3 (98.3)	5.4 (4.7) 97.9 (98.9)	6.3 (8.5) 93.6 (98.0)	4.6 (6.2) 98.0 (98.6)	8.5 (7.9) 97.5 (96.9)
U	2.7 (1.7) 100%	2.1 (1.1) 100%	6.4 (2.0) 100%	2.0 (1.4) 100%	2.5 (3.1) 100%

Table 12(a):
GCE A

Grade	Total Entry	Females	Males	School	College
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A	21.6 (3.6)	22.3 (1.5)	19.0 (42.5)	42.2 (0.0)	6.5 (3.8)
B	25.4 (3.6) 47.0 (7.2)	25.8 (4.5) 48.1(6.0))	23.8 (0.0) 42.8 (12.5))	31.1 (50.0) 73.3 (50.0)	21.3 (1.3) 27.8 (5.1)
C	22.6 (30.7) 69.6 (31.6)	21.2 (24.2) 69.3 (30.2))	28.5 (25.0) 71.3 (37.5)	13.3 (50.0) 85.5 (100.0)	29.5 (23.1) 57.3 (28.2)
D	16.9 (36.6) 86.5 (68.2)	17.6 (34.8) 86.9 ((65.0))	14.3 (43.7) 85.6 (81.3)	11.1 (0.0) (96.6 100.0)	21.3 (38.5) 78.6 (66.7)
E	6.6 (19.5) 93.1(87.7)	7.1 (19.7) 94.0 (84.7)	4.7 (18.6) 90.3 (100.0)	3.4 (0.0) 100.0 (100.0)	9.8 (20.5) 88.4 (87.2)
U	6.9 (12.3) 100%	6.0 (15.3) 100%	9.7 (0.0) 100%	0.0 (0.0) 100%	11.6 (12.8) 100%

**Table 12(b):
AVCE**

These GCE and AVCE, BTEC etc. statistics highlight the following:

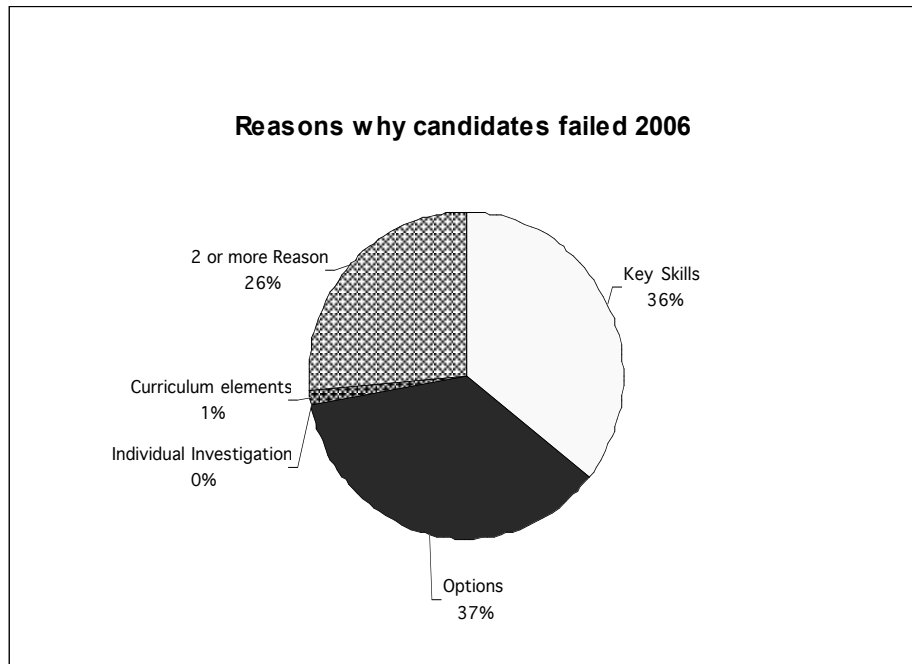
- For the whole WBQ Advanced programme the data show a high pass rate for both the Core (92%) and the Diploma (88%), for both GCE and AVCE.
- There were differences in the achievement of males and females, with the latter slightly out-performing the males in GCE.
- More significant differences emerged between schools and colleges, with higher achievement in the former than in colleges. However, there was a significant improvement in achievement in the GCE and AVCE in both schools and colleges.

7. WHY DID SOME CANDIDATES FAIL?

Of those candidates who failed to achieve the WBQ Advanced Diploma, the following were the 'reasons' for failure (% of the 'failure group'), as revealed by achievement in the various components:

- 35.5% (50.8%) failed because of lack of success in key skills, of which, the most important factors were Application of Number, ICT and Problem Solving.
- 36.8% (41.3%) because of failure in their Options.
- 26.3% (9.6%) failed for 2 or more of these reasons.
- 0% (3.2%) because of the Individual Investigation.
- 1.4% (0.0)% because of the curriculum elements of the Core, i.e. diaries, verification statements.

Difficulties with key skills and the Options continue to be a problem for some candidates.



8. TEACHER ESTIMATES

Teachers were asked to forecast whether candidates would 'pass' or 'fail' the full WBQ Advanced Award. This is a useful indicator of teacher perceptions of how successful they think they and their candidates have been during the course of the WBQ. Indirectly, it also provides further evidence about those learning areas where problems may exist for candidates.

The forecasts produced the following information:

- 12 of the 21 centres entering candidates for the 2006 award completed forecast grade estimates. 6 colleges and 3 schools provided no information. The 12 completing centres provided information for 421 candidates, that is, 66.5% of the total entry.
- 94 % of teacher forecasts were correct, a high figure.
- Incorrect forecasts fell into two categories:

77% **overestimated** candidate achievement. 75% of these were because of poorer than anticipated candidate achievement in the Options (over 70% of these were in the vocational programmes and 25% for GCE), and 25% because of failure with one or more key skill.

22% of teachers who forecast incorrectly did so by **underestimating** candidate performance (again, over three-quarters underestimated in the vocational area).

These statistics indicate a high correlation between teachers' perceptions of their candidates' attainment level and actual award obtained.

9. ADMINISTRATION ISSUES

During 2005-06 the WBQ Project Team introduced an INSET programme that focused on 'administration'. It was felt that the relatively complex nature of an over-arching qualification like the WBQ has within it the potential for administrative problems. Accordingly, guidance was provided on a range of administrative issues from the forms to be completed, their purpose, the timing of their completion and return, to the problems that could arise. Even though there was some progress in the period leading up to the award of the 2006 results, it is clear that a number of problems still persist with some centres. The list that follows contains some examples of administrative errors and problems that emerged during the two year cycle. It should be emphasised however, that most centres fulfil all administrative requirements.

- In one example, instruction was received to withdraw candidates in May/June but when provisional results were issued in August the centre complained that it had not intended the candidates to be withdrawn. All the candidates did achieve the Advanced Diploma.
- In another, candidates were entered for the Advanced Diploma but the centre did not enter them for the additional level 3 key skills needed to obtain the Diploma (these candidates already had 6 key skills at level 2 and had achieved the Intermediate Diploma in March but should have been entered for three key skills at level 3).
- In one centre, a candidate was recorded as a female with one awarding body and as a male with another awarding body. So, the results did not match.
- Another centre indicated in the Part 2 Entry that all its candidates were taking their key skills with OCR in June 06. However, the centre then did IT with the WJEC in June 05.
- For her key skills results, one candidate had the same middle name, same surname and same date of birth; however, her first name was spelt differently for just one key skill result.
- A centre changed the candidates from a BTEC Diploma to a BTEC Certificate but did not enter the candidates properly for the BTEC Certificate - therefore it did not appear on the results file from the awarding body.
- One centre entered its candidates for BTECs through one campus but then entered the same candidates for key skills via another campus which made matching the date more difficult.
- Several centres 'forgot' to enter their candidates for key skills or 'forgot' to claim proxies, leaving the candidates entered for the WBQ with no chance of achieving it.

- One candidate with a 'double-barrelled' name had the full name recorded for one awarding body but only part of the name recorded for another.
- Three candidates were entered for the Advanced Diploma and their Individual Investigations were assessed at level 3 but when provisional results were issued the centre said that it had entered those three for the Intermediate Diploma.
- One centre had all its candidates entered for the Options with another campus.
- A number of candidates would have failed the Options because the WJEC had not been informed that 4 GCSEs had already been obtained. This was picked up the WBQ Team.

The result of errors such as these is that information is still being checked in the day before the results are published, with urgent telephone calls and emails being exchanged between the WBQ Offices and a range of GCE, Vocational and Key Skills Awarding Bodies. There is a period of approximately a month after provisional results are issued for centres to raise queries about the results. This period is called 'Enquiries upon results' and ends on or around the 20.9.06.

10. SO, WHAT CONCLUSIONS CAN WE DRAW FROM THE 2006 WBQ?

- **Aims and achievement:** two of the basic aims of the WBQ are (a) to increase candidates' retention rates and (b) to raise levels of achievement. Clearly, the results show varying levels of success. The improving retention rate is a source of satisfaction, but is still too low (24% did not complete the full programme and obtain an award). However, the reasons given why some candidates do not complete the WBQ programme provide pointers about where centres and the WBQ Team can concentrate their attentions in order to remedy this slowly diminishing problem, for example, perceptions about the demands of the WBQ Core, especially the key skills and the Individual Investigation. Those completing the full programme achieved very high success rates with 88% gaining the Advanced Diploma, whilst the success rate in achieving the required six key skills shows a positive outcome of the WBQ teaching-learning programme.
- **Prior achievement:** the Key Stage 3 and GCSE data suggest that the 2004-06 cohort had a relatively high standard of prior achievement. There were only small differences between the sub-groups (male/female, school/college) but there was clear evidence again that candidates who did not complete the WBQ programme were slightly lower achievers than those who completed. These sets of data suggest that information about prior achievement may well be of value to teachers when deciding which candidates may need particular targeted attention.

- **Courses followed:** the majority, but a smaller majority than in the 2003-05 cycle, of candidates followed GCE courses. In addition, there was a close correlation between type of course and type of centre, that is, school or college, with the overwhelming number of GCEs being offered in schools and AVCEs/BTECs in colleges. A small but increased number (9%) of candidates followed both GCE and AVCE/BTEC programmes. Within the two types of programmes, the top 10 GCE subjects show a balance between humanities subjects and maths/sciences, but also with the presence of the newer subjects, Sociology and Media/Film. The 4.3% of candidates who entered for AS levels (not to be carried into a full GCE A level award) largely followed 'general' subjects, with a distinct trend towards 'general education'. The vocational programmes were dominated by AVCEs, both 12 and 6 Unit programmes, with the three most popular being Health and Social Care, Business and Travel and Tourism. Similar patterns of programming are followed in BTEC. There is clearly a need to extend vocational provision into other areas of the school and college curricula.
- **Key skills:** generally, results in the key skills were very good, particularly in the number of candidates achieving the required six, and in the rate of success in Communication, Working with Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance; these were the key skills most frequently used at level 3. Less satisfactory was achievement in Application of Number, ICT and Problem Solving. There were also different patterns of achievement between males/females and schools and colleges in some key skills. However, the general conclusion to be drawn from the data is that many centres and their candidates have achieved high standards.
- **Individual Investigations:** even though a number of centres suggested that some of their candidates found the Individual Investigation difficult and was a contributory factor to 'drop out' from the WBQ, the majority submitted good Individual Investigations. However, moderators pointed out that an area of concern is the limited use made of the skills of analysis and presentation, and the ability to evaluate and draw conclusions. Clearly these are two areas where candidates could be given more advice. Teachers may find the examples of candidates' work to be circulated with this report of use in this process.
- **Diaries/records/verification statements:** work submitted showed that most candidates had completed effective records of their work, whilst Community Participation, Team Enterprise and Working with an Employer appeared to generate both enthusiasm and work of a high standard among candidates.
- **Language Module:** even though improvements were evident, this is still the weakest part of the WBQ Core programme. The main areas of concern remain (a) the amount of time spent on the Module, and (b) the lack of evidence of progress made between the beginning and end of the course.
- **Why did some candidates fail?** as anticipated in the reasons given by centres for non-completion, an important contributory factor to 'failure' is difficulty in coming to terms with key skills, especially in Application of

Number, ICT and Problem Solving, although some centres achieved success with these. Again this year, a number of centres still found some difficulty in adjusting to the administrative demands of the WBQ in relation to the key skills, for example, by delaying entry until late in the academic year – when earlier submission of portfolios allows resubmission to key skills awarding bodies. On the other hand, the anticipated difficulties with the Individual Investigation and the diaries/verification statements did not materialise. Finally, some candidates continue to encounter problems in completing their Option programmes, related, perhaps, to their perception of workload. It must also be pointed out that some candidates consider the WBQ Core to be less ‘important’ than their Option programmes – so, when under pressure towards the end of their course, they ‘give up’ the ‘less important’ part. It appears however, that this attitude is slowly decreasing.