



YMCA **Wales** Community College



Curriculum Policy





YMCA Wales Community College (the College) will:

- support organisations to provide learning opportunities that enable people to positively affect their own lives and actively participate in their own communities
- provide a range of specially designed educational opportunities for people who are engaged in learning through the Offender Management programme
- support voluntary and statutory Youth Work organisations to develop workforce capacity to work with young people

Curriculum

The College has no specialist equipment or resources and does not maintain a core curriculum to meet the demands of full time learners. Instead it enjoys a degree of freedom and flexibility in arranging its programmes of study. Such an approach is entirely in line with the needs of the College's target groups.

The College's provision is devised to complement courses offered by the traditional Further Education Colleges. The College aims to provide a route whereby learners are able to access non-accredited provision as a first step into education, where levels of academic pressure are reduced, and opportunities are offered to engage in Aged Cymru accredited provision.

The College has positioned itself in the Further Education market place as a provider of niche learning opportunities that are not available elsewhere. The College continues to build upon its triadic areas of expertise – offender management, youth work training and community development.

The percentage of the College's overall provision allocated to offender management has remained at approximately 50%, whilst the provision allocated to youth work training has increased to over 45%. The percentage of community development work has been reduced to 5% of overall provision to accommodate the growth in youth work training, but nevertheless this area of work remains a priority for the College.

Although the College works with many young people who are identified as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETS) through its work with Offender Management, it does not directly target those learners. However the College works in partnership with organisations, such as the National Probation Trust, local authority Youth Services, voluntary sector youth organisations, housing associations and Youth Offending Teams who have a remit to work with NEETS.

The College has therefore identified its position as providing training for those organisations who work directly to the NEETS agenda. If learners, who are identified as NEETS, enrol on College courses the usual approach to encourage learners on completion of their learning with the College to pursue other opportunities for education, training and / or seek employment.

Progression

The College remains committed to working, in the main, with learners at Introductory and Intermediate levels and does not, in the main, seek to develop its own progression routes when learners can be better served elsewhere. The College believes that a part of the learning on a YMCA course is to develop the confidence to access further education opportunities in a more formal academic setting than the College can provide.

However because Youth Work is a specialist area of learning, the College, in collaboration with Agored Cymru, has developed a Youth Work training pathway through to Level Three. The level Three certificate in Youth Work provides learners with a recognised qualification which gives them direct access into higher education learning.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

The College seeks to employ well qualified, experienced tutors who utilise effective teaching and learning strategies. The College's quality assurance procedures ensure that teaching and learning is regularly observed and best practice is highlighted.

Learning opportunities are delivered in community settings that are accessible and appropriate to the needs of the target group.

The size of the learning group and the pace of delivery are dictated by the needs of the learners. Small classes are held where appropriate. Courses are delivered in a relaxed, informal style that engages learners. Learners will be encouraged to be full partners in the learning process.

Increased confidence and the development of study skills will be recognised as achievement alongside course criteria for accreditation. Courses will be of a short duration, ranging from 16 hours to 90 hours. Courses will be offered either on a sessional basis across the academic year or over an intensive period of days.

Conclusion

The College will continually review the curriculum strategy to ensure it is responsive to the needs of its target groups.

*Adopted Jun 2006
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Review Aug 2011*