

Medr

Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

Futures Programme

Programme Specification

This version of the specification is valid
until the FE sector is informed otherwise.

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Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn y Gymraeg |

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1. Introduction

This Programme Specification sets out the requirements for delivery of the Futures Programme. It provides an overview of the programme requirements, including learner eligibility and entry conditions; and details the data submission requirements to enable Medr to monitor programme delivery and learning outcomes for the Futures Programme.

This Specification also forms part of the Agreement between institutions and the Welsh Ministers for the delivery and funding of the Futures Programme. You must ensure that your Futures Programme provision adheres to this Programme Specification.

One programme of study is currently available, at Level 1.

2. Purpose of the Programme

The Futures Programme is a one-year programme of study, which has been developed for Level 1 learners and those most at risk of becoming NEET.

The Programme allows learners to experience a range of vocational areas by increasing exposure to different progression pathways, whilst building resilience, employability skills and wellbeing strategies through an intensive tutorial and support programme.

The learners will have the opportunity to develop the skills required to move onto a Level 2 programme of study, employment or a supported work placement.

The main aims of the Futures Programme are to:

- increase retention in college and guide learners to selecting a vocational subject specialism in the following academic year; and
- increase exposure to different career and progression pathways, build resilience, whilst providing an intensive tutorial and wellbeing programme to minimise risk of disengagement and withdrawal.

3. Delivery Overview

The Futures Programme can be delivered in a similar way to Passport to Success¹ with three 10–12-week blocks of study. Each block would provide learners with essential skills and be underpinned by the *Five Ways to Wellbeing*, as outlined by the NHS / Mind (New Economics Foundation, 2011)².

Learners could study one or all of the blocks. All project work will be underpinned by the development of literacy, numeracy and digital skills.

¹ Passport to Success equips young people with a range of skills that will help them stay in school and acquire the education, professional skills, employment readiness and confidence they need to succeed in life and in the workplace. The programme targets vulnerable youth who are in school but at risk of dropping out, as well as those that are out of school, out of work, or working in dangerous environments. A key measure of success is the extent to which young people are either in school or employed six months after participating in the programme.

² Please see [Five Ways to Wellbeing](#).

4. Learner Eligibility and Entry Requirements

To be eligible for entry onto the programme a learner must be aged 16 or over on 31 August, immediately prior to the commencement of the programme.

Please note that Medr also expects priority to be given, in the first instance, to those learners aged 16 to 18 on the 31 August, immediately prior to the commencement of the programme³.

5. Programme Content

The blocks of study are as follows:

- Block 1: Core (Get Ready) – At the end of the 10-week block students will be ready to learn, able to connect with a group of people and present ideas of what they want to achieve in the future.
- Block 2: Foundation (Get Set) – At the end of the 10-week students will have developed skills specific to their future plans.
- Block 3: Launch Pad (Go!) – At the end of the 10-week block students will have completed a work placement of at least one week, showcased their skills and produced an action plan for future success.

Each block would build skills across the five Pillars:

- Pillar 1: Connect with Others
- Pillar 2: Be Physically Active
- Pillar 3: Learn New Skills
- Pillar 4: Give to Others
- Pillar 5: Pay Attention to the Present Moment

Work Placements

For the work placements, institutions are expected to work with employers to provide meaningful and hands-on work experience for learners. This element of the programme can be completed outside of term time or during half-term.

The Programme must include at least one work placement with an employer not partly or wholly owned by the institution. A college-based Realistic Working Environment (RWE) should only be used as a last resort to make up the required number of days. Please note that the use of RWE may adversely affect the progression of a learner, as feedback from industry indicates that a placement in a True Work Environment is more advantageous for learners looking to progress to employment or an apprenticeship.

Projects undertaken on behalf of external clients / organisations within the college workshops can count towards the work placement hours as long as they are not in the timetabled teaching hours for the class and the employer that coordinates the work

³ A learner is considered to be age 18 until the end of the academic year in which their nineteenth birthday falls. This definition ensures that the funding of a 16 to 18 year-old learner does not change during an individual's programme if the learner becomes 19 years old during an academic year.

placement is also present. Please also note that working alongside in-house college technicians to service, clean and maintain equipment does not count towards the work placement quota.

Institutions must ensure that arrangements are in place to oversee any work placements; including up-to-date health and safety and risk assessments.

Institutions must also ensure that each learner has a Work Placement Plan, which sets out his/her planned attendance and the arrangements in place for monitoring the placement. A suggested template for a Work Placement Plan is attached at Annex A.

6. Data Submission Requirements

Medr will use data from the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) / Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) to monitor programme delivery and learning outcomes for the Futures Programme.

In line with the conditions set out in the annual *Grant Award Letter*, institutions must ensure that data is submitted in the correct format and in a timely manner.

The LLWR User Support Manual⁴ and the PLASC Technical Completion Notes⁵ set out the guidelines that institutions should follow when submitting data for the current academic year.

Programme Code

The following programme code (LP74) should be used for learners on the Futures Programme:

8800F01B Futures Programme Level 1

Funding Information

The total enrolments for this Programme are capped at 20 for each institution within one academic year.

7. Monitoring and Audit

Monitoring and audit will play a role in ensuring that the guidance is being applied consistently and to help assess whether policies, procedures and controls are adequate.

Monitoring Approach

The approach to monitoring will focus on the following areas:

- compliance with the programme's specifications; and
- learning outcomes for the programme.

⁴ See [Lifelong learning Wales record \(LLWR\)](#).

⁵ See [Pupil level annual school census \(PLASC\)](#).

This will be achieved through a combination of in-year and end-of year monitoring; a data matching exercise; and detailed audit testing of learners on Futures Programmes.

Compliance with Programme Specification

Medr will use LLWR / PLASC data to monitor compliance with the programme specification. This will include monitoring the relevant programme and activity datasets, to ensure that programme delivery requirements are being met in full.

Learning Outcomes

Learner destination is a key performance measure for the programme and crucial in evaluating programme delivery.

It is expected that the vast majority of learners who successfully complete the Futures Programme will progress onto full-time Level 2 Programmes, employment or a supported work placement.

Audit Testing

In addition to the approach to monitoring set out above, all data returned by the Further Education institutions will be subject to existing end of year audit requirements⁶. Within this, a particular emphasis will be placed in the *Auditors' Notes for Guidance* to ensure that external auditors appropriately sample learners undertaking the Futures Programme.

8. Contact Details

For any queries relating to the content of this Programme Specification, please contact Medr at the following mailbox: InvestmentandPerformance@medr.cymru.

⁶ The audit requirements for the current year will be published at the end of the academic year.

9. Annexes

A. Recording the Work Experience⁷

| Futures Programme – Work Placement Plan | |
|---|--|
| Learner Name: | |
| Qualification(s) being undertaken: | |
| Employer Name: | |
| Work Placement Address: | |
| Nature of Business: | |
| Name of person learner will report to: | |
| Planned attendance: | |
| Planned monitoring visits by tutor: | |

I agree to the above Work Placement Plan:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Signed by Learner: | Signed by Tutor: | Signed for Employer: |
| Learner name: | Tutor name: | Position in company: |
| Date: | Date: | Date: |

⁷ NB: This is only a suggested template for the Work Placement Plan

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