

Learner Recovery and Progression Funding Further education institutions

Programme Specification

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

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1. Background

Learner Recovery and Progression Funding has been allocated to enable local authority sixth forms and further education institutions to provide additional learning hours for learners in years 12, 13, and above.

This additional funding has been provided in recognition that learners will have experienced disruption as a result of the COVID pandemic. As such, learners may require further support and guidance to help safeguard their wellbeing, develop their resilience and successfully achieve their qualifications.

A recent report by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), [What Shapes Pathways and Transitions?](#), identified that learners in Wales feel less confident about learning independently and the activities that support this, such as organising their time and monitoring their progress, than the OECD average.

The OECD report also provides a policy pointer for Wales to explore creating progression pathways which build on the foundations learners have at the point they enter post-16 education, including filling in gaps and missing knowledge and skills, and creating a pathway towards 'completion'.

Estyn has recently published thematic reports on [Fostering mutual respect – promoting positive behaviours in secondary schools](#) and [Learner Behaviour in Further Education Colleges](#). Both recognise the lasting effects of the pandemic that continue to shape learner behaviour with many young people exhibiting developmental delays, particularly in social skills and resilience. Although the immediate impacts of the pandemic have lessened in the past year, the residual challenges are evident in learners' engagement and their capacity to cope with academic pressures.

The *Fostering mutual respect – promoting positive behaviours in secondary schools* report suggests that there are many reasons why pupils may display challenging behaviour. These include family instability, socio-economic pressures, mental health problems and additional learning needs. Common behaviour issues identified by schools involve persistent low-level disruption, acts of defiance and, to a lesser extent, physical confrontations. External factors such as the influence of social media and community-related issues such as anti-social behaviour have led to more complicated behaviours seen in schools. The report recommends that schools strengthen their behaviour management systems by involving all stakeholders, including feeder schools, parents and carers, governors and local authorities, in developing clear, consistent policy and processes.

The *Learner Behaviour in Further Education Colleges* report recognises that negative behaviours are still prevalent in colleges with lateness, absenteeism, inappropriate use of social media, and vaping being commonly reported issues. More concerning behaviours, although less frequent, include incidents of sexual harassment, substance misuse, and peer violence. While the report recognises that Colleges generally provide professional learning opportunities in behaviour management and trauma-informed practices, it also recognises that Colleges are at varying stages in embedding behaviour management practices.

2. Aim of the Programme

The aim of the funding is to ensure that:

- learners have the opportunity to review previous learning and develop knowledge in order to meet the demands of their course, focussing on filling gaps in missing knowledge and skills;
- learners are provided with specific pastoral support, including support with social skills, resilience and confidence building to enable them to better cope with academic pressures, aiding successful learning and progression;
- Learners are provided with opportunities to develop their independent learning skills, including research skills and time management.
- Colleges are able to establish effective systems with clear frameworks to promote positive behaviour and implement strategies to help improve behaviour and attendance (a **max 10%** of the original allocation for Learner Progression and Recovery funding without prior written approval).

Estyn's [Learner Behaviour in Further Education Colleges](#) report recommends that colleges:

R1 Collaborate to ensure that those with less well-developed behaviour management approaches can learn from those with more well-established systems and processes, enabling them to improve and refine their own practices

R2 Ensure that there is clear guidance available to learners about the responsible use of social media and implement targeted strategies to manage social media misuse through teaching and learning, and behaviour management processes

R4 Increase awareness among learners and staff about the availability of specialist behavioural support teams and services, ensuring clear communication channels and visible signposting throughout the college environment

R5 Further develop tailored, inclusive support for learners who feel more vulnerable as a result of their protected characteristics, ensuring that behavioural support systems meet their unique needs

3. Programme Content

Each provider will have its own perspective as to how to best support its learners and this will vary dependant on the programmes being undertaken, as well as the learner characteristics. However, Providers should¹:

- Have a clear vision for the outcomes they desire from this additional funding

¹ These are Estyn recommendations.

- Work with a wide range of partners to develop strategies to support learners' progress and wellbeing
- Regularly track and evaluate the impact of additional spending in order to adjust current plans and inform future planning

The examples below are for information only and set out how the funding may be used.

a) Teaching costs (Evidenced through LLWR)

- i. Additional group-based hours including:
 - extended timetabled hours per week for each subject
 - specific upskilling targeted by subject (i.e. Mathematics for Physics, English Language for Sociology)
 - blocks of Maths/English specific teaching
 - additional workshop, laboratory, studio group lessons
- ii. Additional 1-1 teaching:
 - specific subject tuition
 - Maths and/or English tuition
 - specific workshop time for practicals / hand skills / lab skills / studio skills
- iii. Pastoral support (not linked to subject area delivery):
 - additional timetabled hours to provide support for resilience, return to learning, goal setting, confidence building, exam(s) preparation, study skills, presentation skills (group or 1-1)
 - online support materials for delivery to small groups
- iv. Additional study skills activities:
 - additional study skills delivery to small groups by level
 - enhanced induction activities, summer schools, and half term schools
 - 'more able and talented learners' events and enrichment activities
 - Independent learning skills

b) Non-teaching costs (Evidenced through the statement of expenditure)

- i. Learner support services:
 - additional Wellbeing Officer to support attendance and early intervention
 - additional LSA (learning support assistant) time to help learners outside of the classroom
 - ELSA (emotional learning support assistant) support for learners with emotional wellbeing
 - additional learner engagement officers to support learners to access the broader curriculum and extracurricular activities
 - counselling for learners with more severe mental health needs
 - additional IT support
 - employability skills support
- ii. Administration
 - producing learner 'engagement' materials

- development and implementation of effective systems or strategies to promote positive behaviours

Learners can undertake group-based learning, learning on a 1:1 basis or a mixture of both.

Learners enrolled on Accelerated or Enhanced Learning Programmes, where the number of learning hours are above the standard, are **not** eligible for Learner Recovery and Progression Funding.

Colleges may use, without prior written approval from Medr, up to 10% of their original budget allocation of the Learner Recovery and Progression Funding to implement strategies to help improve behaviour and attendance.

4. Funding, Monitoring and Evaluation

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.

Medr will use data from the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) to monitor programme delivery. Institutions must ensure that data is submitted in line with data submission requirements outlined in section 5 and in a timely manner.

In addition, Colleges should complete:

- the statement of expenditure **signed by the Director of Finance** (Annex A); and
- the Funding, Monitoring and Evaluation template (Annex B)

and return to Medr InvestmentandMonitoring@medr.cymru by **31 August 2027**.

Reclaim of funding

From 2026/27, Learner Recovery and Progression funding is one of five funding streams that form part of Medr's 'Support and Wellbeing Fund'. The Support and Wellbeing Fund allows providers flexibility to move funding between each of its components.

Following the return of the required monitoring expectations for each component funding stream, any underspend below 100% of a provider's total Support and Wellbeing Fund allocation will be reclaimed in full. There will be no option of carrying forward this allocation to future years.

5. Data Submission Requirements

The LLWR User Support Manual² sets out the guidelines that institutions should follow when submitting LLWR data for the current academic year.

² This can be accessed at [Lifelong learning Wales record](#).

Group Based Learning

For group-based learning, the Learner Recovery and Progression Funding (LRPF) programme code should relate to the sector of the full time programme of study. For example, if a learner on a Health and Social Care full time programme is undertaking additional group-based hours, then the estimated number of LRPF funded hours should be recorded³ against code 0100XXXR.

In line with all programmes, where a learner drops out within the first 8 weeks, no funding will be aligned to that learner.

Once the additional group-based hours have been fully delivered, the actual number of LRPF hours should be updated⁴ to reflect hours delivered. The requirement for this to change from the value previously recorded as estimated number of LRPF hours only where there is a significant change to the original timetabled hours. It does not need to change to reflect that a learner was not in attendance for two weeks, for example.

Please note that where the LRPF programme code does not match the sector area of the full time programme, these hours will be considered as ineligible for funding.

1:1 Learning

For 1:1 hours, the LRPF programme code 9900XXXR should be used. This is irrespective of the subject sector area of the full time programme of study.

Once the additional LRPF 1:1 hours have been fully delivered, the actual number of hours should be updated to reflect the actual hours delivered and should correspond to the provider's internal monitoring systems that logs 1:1 support.

Programme Codes

The following programme codes (LP74) should be used for learners participating in Engagement courses:

0000XXXR	Group Based Hours: General Education
0100XXXR	Group Based Hours: Health, Public Services and Care
0200XXXR	Group Based Hours: Science and Mathematics
0300XXXR	Group Based Hours: Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
0400XXXR	Group Based Hours: Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
0500XXXR	Group Based Hours: Construction, Planning and the Built Environment
0600XXXR	Group Based Hours: Information and Communication Technology
0700XXXR	Group Based Hours: Retail and Commercial Enterprise
0800XXXR	Group Based Hours: Leisure, Travel and Tourism
0900XXXR	Group Based Hours: Arts, Media and Publishing
1000XXXR	Group Based Hours: History, Philosophy and Theology
1100XXXR	Group Based Hours: Social Sciences
1300XXXR	Group Based Hours: Education and Training

³ For LLWR submissions this related to field LP69.

⁴ For LLWR data submissions, this relates to field LP71.

1400XXRX Group Based Hours: Preparation for Life and Work
1500XXRX Group Based Hours: Business, Administration and Law
9900XXRX 1:1 Hours

6. Contact Details

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

7. Annexes

A. Statement of Expenditure – Learner Recovery and Progression Funding



Return to:	InvestmentandMonitoring@medr.cymru
Return by:	31 August 2027

Name of FE Institution	
Total Expenditure for Learner Recovery and Progression Activity	
Date of Last External Assessment of Internal Audit	
Conducted by	
Is this compliant with PSIAS 1312? Yes/No	

I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief that the information given above is correct and that all expenditure was carried out against the agreed aims and objectives and associated Terms and Conditions of Funding.

I also certify that clear accounting records have been maintained at provider level to identify receipt of the funding and its subsequent distribution to the respective area of service; and that funding is covered by the Institutions' normal financial controls, including periodic review by internal audit.

	Director of Finance (or equivalent)
Name	
Signature	
Date	

B. Funding, Monitoring and Evaluation Template

This should be completed and submitted on the document provided.

Please refer to the guidance notes below when completing this information.

Grant Title	Learner Recovery and Progression Funding	Period of Funding	2026/27 Academic Year
FEI		Contact Email	

Funding table

Please refer to the guidance notes before completion

Use of funding Please select from the drop-down box and provide further information in the Comments box. If the group or 1-1 teaching is for Pastoral Support, please include narrative in the comments box to reflect this	Funding/ Expenditure (£)	Approx. number of unique beneficiaries	Approx. number of beneficiaries as % of total cohort	Rate the impact of the spend on a scale of 1- 10 (see guidance notes for descriptors)	Comments
Choose an item.					
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Choose an item.					
Total	£				

Evaluation

Q1) Overall, how effective was the funding in achieving the intended outcomes?

Please reflect on what was achieved in relation to the original objectives. You may wish to describe the motivation behind the work that was undertaken. Were there any unexpected outcomes (either positive or negative)? Did funded activity/spending need to be adjusted in any way during the period? You may wish to comment on the value achieved relative to the volume of funding i.e. value for money.

Please select a rating on the scale of 1-5	1 Not at all	2	3 Moderately	4	5 Very
Please provide a concise written response					

Q2a) Tell us how the activities delivered via Learner Recovery and Progression Funding have benefited learners with support needs.

Tell us how the activities delivered via Learner Recovery and Progression Funding have benefited learners with ALN.

A learner with additional learning needs (ALN) is one who has a learning difficulty or disability that calls for additional learning provision (ALP) beyond that normally available for learners of the same age, with these needs and the required provision formally identified and recorded in an Individual Development Plan (IDP). See [The additional learning needs code](#) for more information.

Tell us how the activities delivered via Learner Recovery and Progression Funding have benefited learners with other support needs

Learner with support needs - A learner with support needs (who does not meet the threshold for ALN) is one who experiences barriers to learning but whose needs can be met through enabling support or reasonable adjustments within provision generally available, without requiring an IDP. For example, this may include short-term intervention support, differentiated teaching and pastoral or wellbeing support.

Number of learners with ALN engaged with under Learner Recovery and Progression Funding

Number of learners with other support needs engaged with under Learner Recovery and Progression Funding

Approximately, what percentage of your funding was used to work with learners with ALN?

Approximately, what percentage of your funding was used to work with learners with other support needs?

How would you rate the positive impact to those learners with ALN? Please also provide a written response to explain your rating.

Please select a rating on the scale of 1-5	1 No impact	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Positive impact
Please provide a concise written response					

How would you rate the positive impact to those learners with other support needs? Please also provide a written response to explain your rating.

Please select a rating on the scale of 1-5	1 No impact	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Positive impact
Please provide a concise written response					

Q2b) Tell us how the activities delivered via Learner Recovery and Progression Funding have benefited learners who are in receipt of Education Maintenance Allowance, low attenders or at risk of becoming NEET.

Number of these learners engaged with under transition funding

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Approximately, what percentage of your funding was used to work with these learners?

	%
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How would you rate the positive impact to these learners? Please also provide a written response to explain your rating.

Please select a rating on the scale of 1-5	1 No impact	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Positive impact
Please provide a concise written response					

Q3) Rate how you think the work that was funded will have a positive impact on any future activity.

You might want to consider if the funded activity/spend that you undertook result in any permanent improvements? i.e., has the funding resulted in permanent changes or are funded changes temporary with practice/circumstances likely to revert to previous norms once the additional funding is discontinued? Are any aspects of the improvements achieved sustainable without continued additional funding? i.e., will they become business as usual/the new norm?

Please select a rating on the scale of 1-5	1 No impact	2	3 Moderate	4	5 Positive impact
Please provide a concise written response					

Q4) Please include any other comment that you feel appropriate (optional)

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C. Funding, Monitoring and Evaluation – Completion Guidance

Funding Table

Use of funding	Please use the drop- down box to select the type of activity. Please provide further information in the Comments box.
Funding / Expenditure (£)	Please provide a figure to indicate how much funding was used to enable each different activity type. The expenditure for additional group-based hours, additional 1-1 teaching, pastoral support and additional study skills activities is calculated via LLWR. Please enter in £ format.
Approx. number of unique beneficiaries	Depending on the context, it is acceptable to give an estimation here (in such cases, please note this in the comments column). Where possible please count individuals who have/are benefitting directly from the funding rather than those who possibly could have benefitted (i.e., had the offer but did not take it up). In addition, for the purposes of this table, there is no need to include indirect beneficiaries. For example, funding for teachers' professional learning will directly benefit the teachers involved, and indirectly benefit their learners; in this case only the number of teachers need be included in this column. Indirect beneficiaries can be highlighted in the comments column if appropriate. Please enter in number format.
Approx. number of beneficiaries as % of total cohort	When calculating this percentage, please assume that the 'total cohort' consists of the number of unique 16-19 year-old Medr-funded learners at the provider.
Rate the impact of the spend on a scale of 1 to 10	1 Impact was <u>significantly negative</u>, with the activity or funding having a detrimental effect overall; i.e. making things worse than if the funding had not been spent 2 <u>Slightly negative</u> impact overall 3 Impact was <u>neutral</u> overall i.e., broadly no net benefit was gained as a result of the expenditure 4 <u>Little</u> benefit overall 5 <u>Modest</u> benefit overall 6 <u>Suitable</u> benefit overall 7 <u>Good</u> benefit overall 8 <u>Very good</u> benefit overall 9 <u>Excellent</u> benefit overall that warrants further analysis and highlighting nationally 10 <u>Exceptional</u> benefit overall that warrants further analysis and highlighting nationally
Comments	Use this column to provide any additional contextual information that supports a better understanding of the information entered in the table.

D. Learner Recovery and Progression Funding Case Study Template – Optional*

*The submission of case studies is optional unless specifically requested by Medr officials. Note that where useful and convenient, you may repeat text already included as part of the monitoring and evaluation questions within your case study submissions. Case study submissions may be shared with wider stakeholders.

Name of College:
Background information on the setting/provider: This section is intended to give a concise, factual description of the provider and the community it serves. You may want to include some or all of the following: • Numbers of staff/learners, age range of learners. Number of learners studying part-time/full-time. Number of A-level/vocational courses. • Percentage of enrolments at A-Level/L3 Vocational/Level 2/Level 1. • Subject areas with the largest proportion of provision. • Information on the schools/area where learners are recruited from including socio-economic factors. • Information on learners' backgrounds including disability, socio-economic and ethnic factors as appropriate.
Context and background to strategy/activity: This section explains how the need and intended beneficiaries were identified, the nature of the need and the planning activity undertaken • Main reasons for implementation of strategy/activity • Objectives • Cost • Groups of learners targeted

Description of nature of strategy or activity identified: This section provides detail of the approach(es) taken and the nature of the work. • A detailed description of the strategy/activity including details of any collaboration with other providers or organisations. • Photos/pictures/tables can be included (subject to necessary permissions)
Impact of strategy/activity: This section focusses on the difference made to the intended beneficiaries. It may include quotations from learners, staff members and other relevant stakeholders (suitably anonymised and/or with permissions secured). This could include impact on; • Learning • Learners attendance • Learners behaviour • Learners confidence and resilience • Independent learning skills, including time management and research.
Additional comments: • How have you celebrated/shared this best practice • How sustainable is this activity/strategy? • What are the lessons learned and what can be taken forward into the future?

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Signature: An authorised signatory of the college	
Name:	
Job title:	
Date:	

Medr

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Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

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