Summary

Meeting	Reference No
04/06/2026	Medr/26/Ag17

Medr

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

Minutes of the 17th meeting of the Board held on 04 June 2026 at the Medr Office, Capital Quarter, Cardiff.

Present:
Board members:
Professor Dame Julie Lydon (Chair)
James Owen (Chief Executive)
Professor David Sweeney (Deputy Chair)
Professor Aaqil Ahmed
Daniel Beard (Items 1-7 only)
James Davies
Cerys Furlong
Jeff Greenidge
Dr Gwenllian Lansdown Davies (Items 1-7 only)
Rob Humphreys
Stephen Marston
Professor Chris Millward
Deio Owen
Orla Tarn
Jayne Woods

Staff:
Rhian Edwards (Executive Director, Policy)
Bethan Evans (Executive Director, Regulation and Funding)
Fran Hill (Chief Operating Officer) (Items 1-7 only)
Kieron Rees (Director, Learner Experience)
Natalie Williams (Senior Manager Board Secretariat)
Steven Williams (Head of Board Secretariat and Corporate Planning)
Kimberely Llewellyn
Gareth Lanagan
Bill Burson

Other attendees:

Philip Blaker, CEO Qualifications Wales and Paul Bevan, Chair Qualification Wales

Apologies:
Estelle Hart

1. Introductory remarks and declarations of interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees.

1.2 Rob Humphries declared an interest in relation to his previous involvement with Global Wales. No other interests were declared.

1.3 Deio Owen confirmed his intention to resign as Associate Member of the Board. The Chair thanked him for his significant contribution to the Board.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2026

2.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 19 March 2026.

3. Matters arising and actions

3.1 The Board noted the updated Action Log and the improved visibility of progress. The Board considered a previous decision regarding flexibility in further education budgets.

3.2 The Board agreed that the approach should be subject to monitoring and review, particularly in relation to its longer-term impact.

Action: Executive to report to the Board on the impact of FE funding flexibility, including outcomes and future implications

4. Chair’s report

4.1 The Board noted an update on the Chair’s recent activity.

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5. Update from Chairs of Committees

5.1 The Board received updates from its Committees on key areas of activity, including governance, workforce, quality, and research and innovation. It noted ongoing scrutiny of governance, risk and internal control arrangements in Medr, alongside workforce and organisational development activity, work to improve provider performance data and quality, and continued sector engagement.

5.2 The importance of strengthening engagement with providers and maintaining proportionate governance expectations was highlighted in the context of ongoing regulatory oversight.

Action: Board to consider approaches to engagement with college governing bodies.

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6. Chief Executive's Report

6.1 The Board received an update on key organisational and sector matters, including progress against organisational priorities, development of the regulatory system, and sector-wide challenges and risks. It discussed the scale and complexity of pressures facing the tertiary education sector and the respective roles of Medr, Welsh Government and institutions in responding to those pressures.

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7 Global Outlook Roadmap

7.1 The Board considered a Global Outlook Roadmap, which sets out Medr's approach to supporting international engagement across the tertiary sector.

7.2 The Board welcomed the overall direction of the roadmap, highlighted the importance of clarity on scope, impact and beneficiaries, and emphasised the need for robust oversight of risks and outcomes.

Decision: The Board approved the roadmap, subject to further refinement to strengthen clarity on purpose, scope, impact and Medr's role.

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8. Investment Policy Statement

8.1 The Board considered a proposed Investment Policy Statement, setting out how Medr would exercise its funding powers.

8.2 The Board supported the shift towards an investment-based approach and noted the need to reflect budgetary context and Medr's ability to use the statement to prioritise, also highlighting the importance of evaluation and value for money.

Decision: Approved the Investment Policy Statement for consultation.

Decision: Delegated authority to the Chief Executive and Task and Finish Group to make minor changes to take account of the Board discussion prior to consultation.

9. Operational Plan 2026-27

9.1 The Board considered the Operational Plan and noted progress in developing a streamlined, high-level approach aligned to strategic priorities.

9.2 The Board requested greater clarity on delivery, sequencing and impact, and emphasised the need for improved reporting to support effective oversight.

Action: Executive to revise reporting arrangements, including development of a high-level summary to support Board oversight.

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10. Any other business

None.

11. Date of next meeting

16 July 2026 at the Welsh Government Office, Llandudno Junction.

Papers provided for information:

12. Unconfirmed minutes of the Research and Innovation Committee meeting held 26 March 2026

13. Minutes of the Funding Task and Finish Group meetings held 12 March 2026 and 13 April 2026

14. Minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting held 06 March 2026

15. Qualifications Wales

Philip Blaker, CEO and Paul Bevan, Chair

The Board received a presentation from Qualifications Wales on its statutory role and responsibilities.

The importance of continued collaborative working across Medr, Qualifications Wales and Welsh Government to support a coherent system-wide approach was recognised by both organisations.

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