

Meeting
19/03/2026

Reference No
Medr/26/Ag16

Confirmed Minutes of the 16th meeting of the Board held on 19 March 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 (online)
Daniel Beard
James Davies
Cerys Furlong
Jeff Greenidge
Estelle Hart
Rob Humphreys
Stephen Marston
Professor Chris Millward
Deio Owen
Jayne Woods

Staff:

Rhian Edwards (Executive Director, Policy)
Bethan Evans (Executive Director, Regulation and Funding)
Steve Williams (Head of Board Secretariat and Corporate Planning)
Dr Ewen Brierley (Director, Regulation) [items 7&8]
Andrew Pickford (Head of Provider Compliance) [item 7]
Giles Cutler (Chief Financial Officer) [items 9&10]
Geoff Hicks (Director, Development, Investment and Performance) [items 9&10]
Richard Arnold (Head of Finance) [item 9]
Gareth Lanagan (Head of Tertiary Investment and Monitoring) [item 9 only]
Fran Hill (Chief Operating Officer) [items 10, 17&18]
Meg Hughes (Public and External Affairs Manager) [items 17&18]
Rhys Davies (Head of Communications) [items 17&18]

Visitors:

Rhodri ab Owen, Camlas [item 17]
Sophie Douglas, Welsh Government [item 18]
Jasmin Kaszubowska, Welsh Government [item 18]
Ruth Meadows, Welsh Government [item 18]
David Morris, Welsh Government [item 18]

Apologies:

Dr Gwenllian Lansdown Davies
Orla Killian-Jones

1. Introductory remarks and declarations of interest

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the observers to the meeting.
- 1.2 Jayne Woods noted her appointment to the Dysgu Board from 1 April 2026.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2026

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 22 January 2026. The Board reflected positively on its visit to Cardiff and Vale College and noted the value of engagement with learners and institutional staff.

3. Matters arising and actions

- 3.1 The Board received a report on actions arising from the previous meetings and noted progress made.

4. Chair's report

- 4.1 The Board received an update on the Chair's recent engagements and noted ongoing sector engagement activity, including discussions relating to higher education governance.

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5. Update from Chairs of Committees

- 5.1 The Board received updates from its committees.
- 5.2 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee update highlighted consideration of matters relating to financial oversight, organisational assurance and regulatory capacity. The Board noted the importance of maintaining effective regulatory oversight and engagement across the tertiary education sector.
- 5.3 The Research and Innovation Committee update noted forthcoming engagement activity with providers.
- 5.4 The Quality Committee update highlighted progress in developing a tertiary-wide learner survey and performance measures to support understanding of learner outcomes. The Board welcomed the opportunities presented by this work.

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6. Chief Executive's Report

- 6.1 The Board received the Chief Executive's report and noted updates on a range of operational and strategic matters, including student support, funding allocations, financial sustainability within the sector and Medr's approach to the publication of statistics and management information.
- 6.2 The Board discussed the updates provided and noted the continuing implementation of the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act and the implications for Medr's future programme of reform

7 Regulatory Framework

- 7.1 The Board considered recommendations relating to Medr's new regulatory framework.
- 7.2 The Board confirmed that it was assured that an appropriate and robust process had been undertaken in developing the framework, including stakeholder consultation and Committee scrutiny. The Board approved publication of the regulatory framework

Redaction: Detailed content withheld due the intention for future publication.

8. Annual Regulatory Report

- 8.1 The Board considered Medr's Annual Regulatory Report and approved its submission in accordance with statutory requirements.

Redaction: Detailed content withheld due the intention for future publication.

9. Deployment of the draft 2026-27 budget

- 9.1 The Board considered proposals relating to the deployment of funding for 2026–27. The Board approved the recommendations presented, with one element to be reconsidered and brought back to a future meeting.

Redaction: Detailed content withheld due to *prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs; information provided in confidence*

10. Quarterly Reporting

- 10.1 The Board received the quarterly corporate performance report and noted the information provided.

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11. Any other business

11.1 There was no other business.

12. Date of next meeting

12.1 The next meeting of the Board will take place on 14 May 2026.

Papers provided for information:

13. Report on Medr's monitoring of the Prevent duty (Medr/26/13)

14. Minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting held 26 November 2025 (Medr/26/14)

15. Minutes of the Quality Committee meeting held 10 February 2026 (Medr/26/15)

16. Minutes of the People and Culture Committee meeting held 15 September 2026 (Medr/26/16)

Strategic discussions

17. Preparing for next government

17.1 The Board received an external presentation on the forthcoming Senedd election and discussed the potential implications for the tertiary education sector and Medr's future engagement activity.

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18. Welsh Government call for evidence

18.1 The Board received a presentation from Welsh Government officials on the future of tertiary education in Wales and discussed opportunities to support the future development of the tertiary education system.

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