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

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Support and Wellbeing Fund 2026/27 – Phase 1: further education institutions

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To: Heads of further education institutions

Respond by: 09 October 2026
More information: InvestmentandMonitoring@medr.cymru

Summary:

The Support and Wellbeing Fund brings together five existing component funding streams into a single, overarching framework:

- Additional Learning Support
- Financial Contingency Fund
- Learner Recovery and Progression
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Period Dignity

This publication provides further information on its use and requirements.

Introduction

1. In Medr's publication Medr/2026/16: Investment for Academic Year 2026/27 (May 2026), a new single funding envelope, which is the combination of 5 existing budgets lines, for the further education (FE) sector was introduced under the working title of the Learner Wellbeing Fund. Following further development and engagement, this funding is now formally titled the Support and Wellbeing Fund.

Purpose and rational

2. The Support and Wellbeing Fund brings together five existing component funding streams into a single, overarching framework, while retaining their individual identities:
   - Additional Learning Support (ALS) (**Annex B**)
   - Financial Contingency Fund (FCF) (**Annex C**)
   - Learner Recovery and Progression (LRP) (**Annex D**)
   - Mental Health and Wellbeing (MHWB) (**Annex E**)
   - Period Dignity (**Annex C** paragraph 24)

3. While each funding stream has distinct delivery requirements, they collectively represent a joined-up system of learner support and are underpinned by strong shared objectives, which include:
   - Enabling focused support for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners;
   - Supporting active participation;
   - Improving wellbeing in its broadest sense;
   - Removing barriers to learning;
   - Promoting equity and inclusion.

4. The move to a single overarching fund recognises providers are best placed to understand how different types of support interact and where resources will have the greatest impact for their learners. How providers will use this investment can change annually. This reflects Medr's strategic intent to:
   - Encouraging collaboration for greater coherence to minimise duplication across different funding streams;
   - Enable a more holistic approach to learner support;
   - Provide greater autonomy and flexibility for providers;
   - Support local decision making, informed by learner need to improve impact of the investment.

Funding allocation

5. Each provider will receive a total allocation under the Support and Wellbeing Fund, comprising of component allocations provided in Table 1.

6. The 2026/27 academic year will operate as a pilot phase for the Support and Wellbeing Fund. This will allow Medr and providers to:
   - Test how flexibility is used in practice;
   - Understand impacts on learners and provision;
   - Identify risks, constraints, and opportunities;

- Inform the development of a Phase 2 approach in 2027/28.

Table 1: Provider allocations

Institution	Additional Learning Support Investment	Financial Contingency Funds (FE)	Period dignity	Learner Recovery and Progression (LRP)	Mental health and wellbeing (MHWB)	Total Support and Wellbeing Fund 2026/27
Bridgend College	£1,066,111	£381,857	£25,785	£419,586	£216,827	£2,110,166
Coleg Sir Gâr	£1,341,108	£486,576	£33,109	£516,455	£250,693	£2,627,941
Coleg Gwent	£2,957,320	£1,056,786	£70,784	£1,165,073	£541,070	£5,791,033
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	£2,331,423	£756,684	£56,541	£946,392	£449,134	£4,540,174
The College Merthyr Tydfil	£694,145	£280,817	£15,856	£275,700	£170,286	£1,436,804
Pembrokeshire College	£814,036	£246,113	£19,981	£316,061	£187,653	£1,583,844
St David's Catholic Sixth Form College	£485,323	£229,008	£10,758.	£202,054	£148,161	£1,075,304
Gower College Swansea	£1,808,793	£727,140	£42,354	£661,731	£330,936	£3,570,954
Cardiff and Vale College	£2,558,705	£970,363	£60,727	£858,871	£468,139	£4,916,805
Coleg Cambria	£2,607,521	£718,076	£62,642	£1,023,827	£483,850	£4,895,916
Coleg y Cymoedd	£2,213,526	£770,607	£51,302	£776,159	£404,986	£4,216,580
NPTC Group of Colleges	£1,571,257	£549,154	£38,327	£598,439	£310,189	£3,067,366
Adult Learning Wales	£391,732	£62,184	£11,834		£88,077	£553,827
The Open University		£33,635				£33,635
National Centre for Learning Welsh		£11,000				£11,000

Structure of the fund for 2026/27

7. What has changed:
   - The five funding streams are now positioned within a single Support and Wellbeing Fund.
   - Providers have increased flexibility to move funding between these components.
   - A single planning process is introduced to capture strategic priorities and delivery intentions.
   - Where funds are transferred from one funding stream component to another, the transferred funding will be subject to guidance and requirements of the component into which the funding has been moved.

8. What has not changed:
   - All five funding component streams continue to exist.

- Detailed guidance which outlines eligible activity and expectations for each component stream remains in place, noting Period Dignity funding guidance is incorporated within the Financial Contingency Fund (FCF) guidance.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing funding supports both learners and staff.

Provider requirements and supporting guidance

9. All FE providers are required to submit a Support and Wellbeing Fund Plan (**Annex A**) by 9 October 2026 to InvestmentAndMonitoring@medr.cymru.

10. Medr will review all submitted plans to ensure that:
    - Proposed allocations are supported by a clear rationale and evidence of need;
    - Potential risks and impacts have been appropriately identified and mitigated;
    - Any movement of funding aligns with the overall purpose of the Support and Wellbeing Fund.

11. Medr will provide feedback of plans by 3 November 2026. This may include requests for further information or clarification and discussion where there are concerns regarding learner impact.

12. Providers will be required to update on delivery and spending plans by 12 February 2027. This will include:
    - Progress against original plans;
    - Changes made to allocations (if any);
    - Emerging impacts and outcomes;
    - Updated risk and mitigation position.

13. While the fund is presented as a single allocation for 2026/27 this document should be read alongside detailed guidance for each funding component.

14. Monitoring will still occur at component level. Reporting arrangements and further detail is provided in the individual guidance documents.

15. Any underspend against a provider's total Support and Wellbeing Fund allocation will be reclaimed in full. Reclaims will be calculated following submission of the required monitoring expectations for each component funding stream. There will be no opportunity to carry forward unspent funding into future years.

16. The intention is to develop a Phase 2 approach for 2027/28, informed by learning from this year. Medr will engage with the sector during late Autumn/early Spring 2026/27 to inform the next phase and consider the actual impact this approach has had. We will take account of provider feedback and delivery experience and exploration of future funding and monitoring models. Feedback will be sought alongside the February 2027 update and through additional engagement activity.

Assessing the impact of our policies

17. We have completed an Integrated Impact Assessment to consider equality, diversity and inclusion, socio-economic impacts, learner voice, Welsh language considerations and the potential impacts of the Support and Wellbeing Fund on the well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

18. There are identified anticipated positive impacts arising from the introduction of the Support and Wellbeing Fund, particularly through improving the coherence, flexibility and responsiveness of support funding. No likely negative impacts were identified at this stage.

19. Many impacts remain prospective rather than evidenced. Medr will therefore monitor implementation, provider use of funding flexibility and emerging impacts throughout the year to ensure any unintended consequences are identified and to inform future development of the fund.

20. Our impact assessment findings include:
    - Identifying likely positive impacts for learners with disabilities and those with Additional Learning Needs.
    - Identifying likely positive impacts across the protected characteristics of disability and sex. No likely adverse equality impacts were identified.
    - The fund contributes positively to a number of national well-being goals and indicators, particularly those relating to mental health and reducing barriers to learning.
    - There is no adverse impacts on the Welsh language were identified.

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