

Apprenticeship Programme in Wales

Grant Assessment Framework

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

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Apprenticeship Programme – Grant Assessment Framework

1. Foreword

- 1.1. The Apprenticeship Programme has been established to identify applicants capable of delivering high-quality apprenticeship provision that meets the needs of learners, employers and the Welsh economy (applicants). As public funding is being awarded, Medr has a responsibility to ensure that every application is assessed fairly, consistently and transparently.
- 1.2. This document explains how applications will be assessed throughout the grant application process. It has been produced to help applicants understand the requirements of each assessment stage, how decisions will be reached and how assessment outcomes contribute to the award of grant funding.
- 1.3. The assessment process has been designed to ensure that applicants first demonstrate they meet Medr's conditions of funding before the quality of their proposals are assessed. Only applicants that successfully satisfy the Stage 1 requirements will be eligible for Stage 2 assessment.

2. The Assessment Process

- 2.1. The Apprenticeship Grant uses a two-stage assessment process.
- 2.2. The first stage establishes whether an applicant is eligible to receive public funding by confirming that it satisfies Medr's conditions of funding. This is a gateway assessment and is assessed on a Pass/Fail basis. Only applicants that successfully establish that they satisfy Medr's conditions of funding at Stage 1 will be eligible to submit, or have assessed, their substantive Stage 2 application.
- 2.3. Stage 2 assesses the applicant's substantive application, that is, the quality of the applicant's proposed apprenticeship delivery arrangements. This stage is assessed using the published criteria and scoring approach contained in this document to inform funding recommendations and allocation decisions.
- 2.4. The two-stage approach ensures that public funding is provided only to applicants that first demonstrate compliance with Medr's mandatory requirements before being assessed on the quality of their proposed delivery.
- 2.5. If an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the assessment, it should follow the appeals process set out in Annex F.

3. The Assessment Journey

Stage	Purpose	Assessment Method	Outcome
Stage 1 – Confirmation that Applicants meet Medr's conditions of funding	Confirms organisational eligibility and compliance with mandatory requirements.	Pass / Fail	Applicants that satisfy Stage 1 are eligible for Stage 2 consideration. assessment
Stage 2 – Evidence of ability to deliver the Apprenticeship Programme	Assesses the quality, capability and delivery of proposals submitted within the Grant Application.	Scored Grant Assessment	Applications that meet the relevant assessment requirements may be considered for grant allocation.
Grant Funding Allocation	Considers assessment outcomes alongside available funding, strategic priorities and programme objectives.	Allocation Decision	Grant Award (where applicable).

4. Stage 1 – Regulation and Funding Conditions of Assessment

- 4.1. Stage 1 provides assurance that applicants satisfy Medr's mandatory conditions of regulation and funding before progressing to the quality assessment stage.
- 4.2. Every applicant is assessed against the same mandatory requirements and must successfully demonstrate compliance before Stage 2 applications can be considered.
- 4.3. The purpose of Stage 1 is to provide Medr with confidence that applicants possess the organisational governance, financial standing, regulatory compliance and assurance arrangements necessary to manage public funding responsibly.
- 4.4. Applicants that do not successfully satisfy the conditions of funding will not progress to Stage 2.

Stage 1 Assessment

- 4.5. Please refer to Annex A for the precise requirements, but for the purposes of this document, these requirements include, but are not limited to:

Assessment Area	Purpose
Legal Status	Confirmation that the applicant is legally constituted and eligible to receive grant funding.

Assessment Area	Purpose
Governance and management	Confirmation that the applicant has appropriate governance, leadership and accountability arrangements.
Financial Sustainability	Evidence that the applicant is financially viable and capable of managing public funds.
Quality and continuous Improvement	Evidence that the applicant, including any provision delivered on its behalf, maintains high-quality delivery and demonstrates a commitment to continuous improvement.
Staff and learner welfare	Confirmation that the applicant has in place effective arrangements to support and promote learner and staff welfare.
Welsh language	The Governing Body of the applicant, or equivalent body, must publish and maintain a Welsh Language Strategy by December 2027. This strategy should set out how the provider will: • promote and encourage greater use of the Welsh language across the provider, so that people – including staff and learners – can use the language naturally in their daily lives • increase demand for, and participation in, tertiary education delivered through the medium of Welsh and, where offered, Welsh as a subject
Learner protection	Confirmation that the applicant will have in place a learner protection plan approved by Medr, on or before a date specified by Medr and must commit to implementing that plan, where relevant
Learner engagement code	Comply with the requirements of the Learner Engagement Code (or any subsequent revisions) Provide evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Learner Engagement Code and its impact
Equality of opportunity	Deliver measurable outcomes to further each of the following aims: • increase participation in tertiary education by people from under-represented groups • retention of learners who are members of under-represented groups to the end of courses • reduction of any gaps in attainment between different groups of learners, where the differences arise from social, cultural, economic or organisational factors • provision of support for learners from under-represented groups finishing their courses, to

Assessment Area	Purpose
	continue in education, find employment or start a business
Complaints procedures	Have in place a procedure for investigating complaints made by learners and former learners about an act or omission of the provider Take reasonable steps to make the procedure known to learners
Regard to advice and guidance	Have regard to advice or guidance given by Medr to the body (either specifically or to persons generally) in exercise of Medr's functions under the Act and therefore: Have regard to any advice or guidance issued by Medr, whether explicitly directed to the provider or more broadly to the sector, recognising that providers may adopt alternative approaches where appropriate to their context Be able to explain the rationale for their approach if requested, but there is no expectation of routine justification or reporting
Information assistance and access	The applicant agrees to provide Medr, or a person authorised by Medr, with such information, assistance and access to the provider's facilities, systems and equipment as Medr may reasonably require to undertake its functions
Declarations	Completion of mandatory declarations
Digital Security and Data	Meet the digital and security requirements
Apprenticeship Regions and sectors planned delivery	For information only - this is not assessed at this stage

- 4.6. Applicants may be asked to provide supporting evidence as detailed in Annex A. Failure to provide necessary information, including such supporting evidence could result in failure of the application, meaning the applicant will not proceed to Stage 2.

Stage 1 Assessment Outcome

- 4.7. Each Stage 1 requirement (except Apprenticeship regions and sectors planned delivery) will be assessed on a Pass/Fail basis.
- 4.8. Applicants must successfully satisfy all mandatory requirements before progressing to Stage 2. Medr may seek clarification where there is genuine uncertainty regarding information submitted as part of the Stage 1 process. Clarification may only be used to understand the information already submitted and must not be used to allow an Applicant to materially amend, supplement or improve its application after submission.

5. Stage 2 – Evidence on ability to deliver the Apprenticeship Programme

- 5.1. Applicants that satisfy Stage 1 will be eligible for Stage 2 assessment. Stage 2 considers the quality of each Applicant's proposed apprenticeship provision and informs recommendations to the Medr Board for grant funding.
- 5.2. Stage 2 involves a comparative assessment to ensure available funding is allocated in a way that reflects the published criteria, programme objectives and the quality of the applications received. The assessment focuses on the quality of the proposals submitted rather than previous funding history or organisational size. Applications should explain clearly how the applicant intends to deliver the requirements of the Apprenticeship Programme and provide sufficient evidence and data to support the claims made.
- 5.3. Stage 2 is structured into five Assessment Sections, each reflecting a key area of apprenticeship provision and contributing to the overall assessment outcome. Each Assessment Section contains one or more application questions, which will be assessed against the published scoring approach before the weighted score for this Section is calculated. The five Assessment Sections are set out in section 6 below and further particularised in Annex A.
- 5.4. Each question will be scored using the published 0–5 confidence-based scoring approach set out in Table 1. The score awarded will reflect the extent to which the Applicant's response provides clear, relevant and credible evidence that it can support the relevant requirements of the Apprenticeship Programme.

Table 1 – Stage 2 Scoring Approach

Score	Descriptor
0	No relevant response or evidence is provided.
1	Very limited confidence: the response is largely inadequate, provides minimal relevant evidence and does not demonstrate how the Applicant will meet the relevant requirement.
2	Limited confidence: the response addresses the question in part but contains material gaps, weak evidence or insufficient detail, meaning only limited assurance is provided.
3	Moderate confidence: the response addresses the question and provides relevant evidence, but lacks the level of detail, development or assurance to justify a higher score.
4	Good confidence: the response addresses the question well, is clear and well evidenced, and contains only minor gaps, uncertainties or areas requiring further assurance.
5	High confidence: the response is comprehensive, clear and credible, provides strong evidence and gives a high level of assurance that the Applicant will meet the relevant requirement.

- 5.5. Where an Assessment Section contains more than one question, the individual question scores will be combined to produce an average section score.
- 5.6. The average section score will then be converted into a weighted section score by dividing it by 5, being the maximum question score available for an individual question and multiplying the result by the published weighting for that section, as shown in Table 2. The weighted section scores for all five assessment sections will then be added together to calculate the application's overall weighted assessment score.

Average Section Score / Maximum Question Score (5) x Section Weighting = Weighted Section Score

Worked example: If an Applicant receives scores of 4, 3 and 5 for the three questions in Assessment Section 1, the Apprenticeship Sector and Pathway Delivery, the average section score would be 4.

The weighted section score would be calculated as follows: $4 \div 5 \times 20 = 16$. This means the Applicant would receive 16 out of the 20 available weighted points for Assessment Section 1.

Total of all Weighted Section Scores = Overall Weighted Assessment Score

Table 2 – Assessment Summary

Assessment Section – Strand 1	Application Questions	Weighting
1. Apprenticeship Sector and Pathways Delivery	Q1–Q3	20%
2. Programme Delivery	Q4–Q6	20%
3. Learner and Employer Engagement, Support and Delivery	Q7–Q13	30%
4. Welsh Language	Q14	10%
5 and 6. Delivery of the Programme's Aims and Objectives, including Displaced Learners	Q15-17	20%

Assessment Section – Strand 2	Application Questions	Weighting
1. Apprenticeship Sector and Pathways Delivery	Q1–Q2	20%
2. Programme Delivery	Q3–Q5	20%
3. Learner and Employer Engagement, Support and Delivery	Q6-Q10	30%
4. Welsh Language	Q10-Q11	10%
5 and 6. Delivery of the Programme's Aims and Objectives, including Displaced Learners	Q11-12	20%

Assessment Section – Strand 3	Application Questions	Weighting
1. Apprenticeship Sector and Pathways Delivery	Q1–Q2	20%
2. Programme Delivery	Q3-Q4	50%
3. Delivery of the Programme's Aims and Objectives.	Q5	30%

6. Assessment Section 1 - Apprenticeship Sector and Pathways Delivery

6.1. Grant Application Question numbers:

Strand 1 – core Apprenticeship Programme	Strand 2 – Degree Apprenticeships	Strand 3 – Supported Apprenticeships
Question 1 – Responding to Sectors and Regions Delivery	Question 1 – Responding to Regional and Labour Market Need	Question 1 – Regional Delivery
Question 2 – Responding to Regional and Labour Market Need	Question 2 – Responding to Future Skills Requirements	Question 2 – Innovative and flexible mechanisms to support learners enter apprenticeship opportunities
Question 3 – Responding to Future Skills Requirements		

6.2. This section assesses the applicant's understanding of current and future skills demand across Wales and its ability to deliver apprenticeship pathways that respond to employer need, regional priorities and Welsh Government policy. Medr will consider the breadth of proposed delivery, alignment with labour market intelligence, flexibility to respond to future priorities and the credibility of the proposed delivery model.

Overall Weighting: 20%

7. Assessment Section 2 – Programme Delivery

7.1. Grant Application Question numbers:

Strand 1 – core Apprenticeship Programme	Strand 2 – Degree Apprenticeships	Strand 3 – Supported Apprenticeships
Question 4 – Supporting Innovative and Flexible Delivery	Question 3 – Supporting Innovative and Flexible Delivery	Question 3 – providing enhanced support to learners

Question 5 – Supporting Learner Outcomes	Question 4 – Supporting Learner Outcomes	Question 4 - Supporting Learner Outcomes
Question 6 – Supporting Self-Assessment and Continuous Improvement	Question 5 – Supporting Self-Assessment and Continuous Improvement	

- 7.2. This section assesses how the applicant intends to organise, deliver and continually improve apprenticeship provision. Assessment focuses on the quality of teaching and learning arrangements, innovation, learner achievement, quality assurance processes and the effectiveness of continuous improvement arrangements.

Overall Weighting: 20% for strand 1 and strand 2

Overall weighting: 50% for strand 3

8. Assessment Section 3 – Learner and Employer Engagement, Support and Delivery

- 8.1. Grant Application Question numbers:

Strand 1 – core Apprenticeship Programme	Strand 2 – Degree Apprenticeships
Question 7 – Supporting Initial Learner Assessment	Question 6 – Supporting Initial Learner Assessment
Question 8 – Supporting Learner Mentoring	Question 7 – Supporting Learner Mentoring
Question 9 – Supporting Employer Mentoring	Question 8 – Supporting Employer Mentoring
Question 10 – Supporting Widening Access and Participation	Question 9 – Supporting Widening Access and Participation
Question 11 – Supporting Employer Engagement	Question 10 – Supporting Employer Engagement
Question 12 – Supporting Shared Apprenticeships	
Question 13 – Using Additional Costs Budget	

- 8.2. This section represents the largest proportion of the assessment because successful apprenticeship delivery depends upon high-quality engagement with

learners and employers throughout the apprenticeship journey. Assessors will consider how applicants intend to recruit, support, mentor and retain learners whilst working collaboratively with employers to maximise successful outcomes.

- 8.3. Evidence of inclusive practice, learner support, employer responsiveness and effective partnership working will be considered across all responses.

Overall Weighting: 30%

9. Assessment Section 4 – Welsh Language

- 9.1. Grant Application Question numbers:

Strand 1 – core Apprenticeship Programme	Strand 2 – Degree Apprenticeships
Question 14 – Encouraging and promoting the Welsh Language	Question 11 – Encouraging and promoting the Welsh Language

- 9.2. This section assesses how applicants will embed the Welsh language throughout apprenticeship delivery. Assessment considers compliance with Medr expectations and the extent to which applicants will increase opportunities for learners and employers to engage with apprenticeship provision through the medium of Welsh.
- 9.3. Assessors will consider strategic commitment, practical delivery arrangements and opportunities to promote Welsh Medium opportunities and increase participation in Welsh.

Overall Weighting: 10%

10. Assessment Section 5 and 6 – Delivery of the Programme's Aims and Objectives, including Displaced Learners

- 10.1. Grant Application Question numbers:

Strand 1 – core Apprenticeship Programme	Strand 2 – Degree Apprenticeships	Strand 3 – Supported Apprenticeships
Question 15 – Committing to Supporting Displaced Learners	Question 12 – Ensuring effective Governance and Assurance processes	Section 3 of the grant application question 5 - Ensuring effective Governance and Assurance processes
Question 16 – Managing support for Displaced Learners		

Question 17 – Ensuring effective Governance and Assurance processes		
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- 10.2. This section assesses the organisational arrangements that will ensure funded apprenticeship provision remains aligned with the apprenticeship Programme throughout the funding period and the applicant's readiness to support learners whose apprenticeship provision is disrupted during their Apprenticeship Programme.
- 10.3. Medr will consider the applicants' governance, organisational assurance, regulatory compliance, audit arrangements, performance management, financial sustainability and risk management, together with its ability to demonstrate that public funding is used effectively to deliver the programmes objectives.
- 10.4. Assessment will consider the proposed arrangements for protecting learner continuity if funded provision is disrupted, including supporting transitions and minimising disruption to learning.

Overall Weighting: 20% for strand 1 and strand 2

Overall weighting: 30% for strand 3

Medr

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