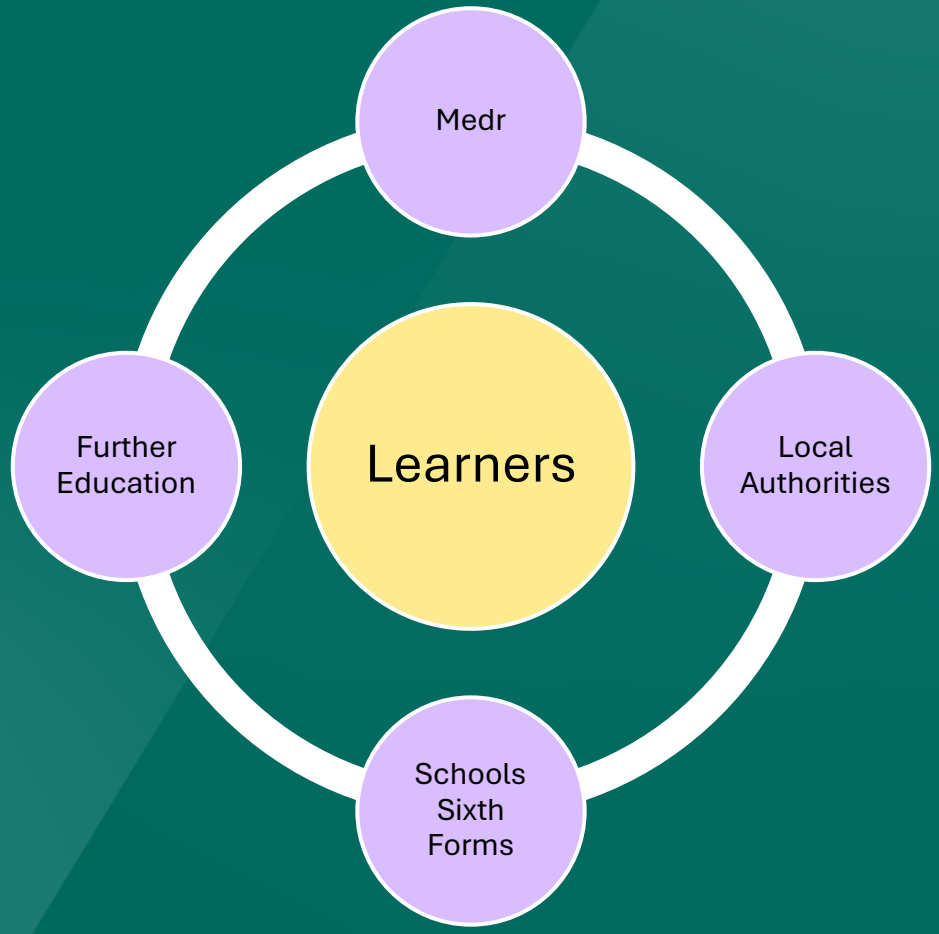
16-18 Local Curricula

Medr

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

Working together to expand opportunities for learners



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

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

Welcome & housekeeping

- Please use the Q&A function throughout the webinar if questions arise.
- We will collect all questions and provide formal responses after the session so that we can make the best use of our time together today.
- We welcome questions in English or Welsh.
- Responses will be provided bilingually and circulated to all attendees following the webinar.
- For those wishing to follow the presentation in Welsh, Welsh-language slides were circulated by email in advance of today's session.

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Programme Leadership

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

Carly Davies Head of Tertiary Coordination and Performance

- Strategic oversight
- System coordination
- Local curriculum formation

Darren Phillips Senior Manager

- Operational delivery
- Stakeholder engagement
- Local curriculum development programme

Working with partners across schools, colleges and local authorities to support implementation of Medr's 16-18 local curriculum responsibilities.

Noddir gan Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by Welsh Government

16-18 Local Curricula

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

Statutory Duties, System Leadership and Medr's Role

Today's session will cover:

- Legislative framework and statutory duties
- Medr's role in local curriculum formation
- Roles of local authorities, schools and FE colleges
- Local curriculum arrangements in practice
- Relationship with sixth form reorganisation
- Next steps and implementation timeline

Useful Links
Draft 16-18 Local Curriculum Guidance (Link shared in the Teams chat)

Please note: Welsh Government's final policy guidance has been shared with participants ahead of today's session.

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Objectives

By the end of this session participants will understand:

- The legislative framework underpinning 16-18 local curricula
- Why responsibility transferred to Medr
- The distinct but connected roles of key partners
- How local curricula and sixth form organisation relate
- What this means for Local Authority, School and FEI planning decisions

Medr

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

The Statutory Framework

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Why Local Curricula Exist

Learner Entitlement in Law

The Core Principle

Every young person should have access to a broad and balanced range of post-16 learning opportunities regardless of where they live.

Local Curricula Exist To:

- Support learner entitlement
- Be informed by learner voice and learner demand
- Support informed decision-making about future pathways
- Enable progression to education, employment and training
- Provide access to academic and vocational pathways
- Promote Welsh-medium opportunities
- Respond to local skills and workforce needs
- Support inclusion and equality of opportunity

Local curricula are not simply an administrative process. They exist to secure learner entitlement.

The Legislative Journey

Learning & Skills Act 2000

Provides the broader framework for planning post-16 education.

Establishes learner entitlement and curriculum planning requirements.

Learning & Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

Established learner entitlement and local curriculum arrangements.

Defined learner entitlement

Places duties on partners to offer broad and balanced curriculum

Requires local authorities and FE institutions to work together in forming local curricula.

Tertiary Education & Research (Wales) Act 2022

Created Medr and transferred responsibilities previously exercised by Welsh Ministers.

Created the framework for a coherent tertiary education system

Transfers relevant functions from Welsh Ministers to Medr.

April 2026

Transferred key functions previously exercised by Welsh Ministers

What the Measure Requires

Key Duties Under the Learning and Skills (Wales) Measure 2009

Local Authorities, Schools and Colleges **Must:**

Collaboration and Learner Entitlement

- Engage in joint-working arrangements for the planning and delivery of local curricula
- Work collaboratively with local authorities, schools, colleges and Medr to support local curriculum arrangements.
- Take all reasonable steps to maximise the availability of courses included within the local curriculum
- Support learner entitlement through access to a broad range of educational options and progression pathways for 16-18 learners.

Welsh Language Duties

- Promote the Welsh language in the formation of local curricula
- Promote Welsh-medium progression pathways and increase access to Welsh-medium learning opportunities.
- Support participation in Welsh-language education and promote Welsh-medium progression pathways for learners.

Further detail on sector duties can be found within Section 2 of the draft 16-18 Local Curriculum Guidance.

Local Curricula **Should:**

- Reflect learner demand
- Support progression pathways
- Take account of labour market intelligence
- Include both academic and vocational options
- Support learners with ALN
- Promote sustainable provision

Medr

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

Statutory Roles & Benefits

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Statutory Roles Across the System

Medr

- The forming and oversight of one or more local curricula for each area
- Assurance
- Evidence and analysis
- System leadership

Schools

- Represent learner demand and their tertiary aspirations
- Deliver agreed provision
- Act as equal local curriculum planning partner and retain responsibility for determining own curriculum offer
- Support informed learner choice
- Work with other providers to broaden opportunities

FEIs

- Act as equal local curriculum planning partner and determine their own curriculum offer and investment decisions
- Bring employer demand and skills intelligence
- Provide specialist academic and technical pathways
- Participate in collaborative planning arrangements
- Deliver provision that contributes to learner entitlement

Local Authorities

- Convene local planning discussions
- Contribute intelligence on population, demand and local priorities
- Identify local needs and priorities
- Highlight gaps, duplication and opportunities for collaboration
- Support the planning and development of local curriculum proposals

Benefits for Learners, Schools, Colleges and Local Authorities

For Learners

- Wider choice of courses
- Stronger progression pathways
- Improved access to inclusive pathways
- Better visibility of opportunities

For Schools

- Greater understanding of learner pathways
- Better evidence for curriculum planning
- Stronger collaboration opportunities
- Improved understanding of local demand and opportunities

For FE Colleges

- Better visibility of provision across an area
- Richer intelligence on learner demand
- Stronger strategic discussions with partners
- Opportunities to showcase specialist provision

For Local Authorities

- A comprehensive view of post-16 provision
- Stronger strategic planning capability
- Better evidence for Welsh-medium planning
- Improved understanding of gaps and duplication

For Wales

- Greater confidence that learner entitlement is being met
- Better use of resources
- Stronger collaboration
- Improved evidence for future planning

Medr

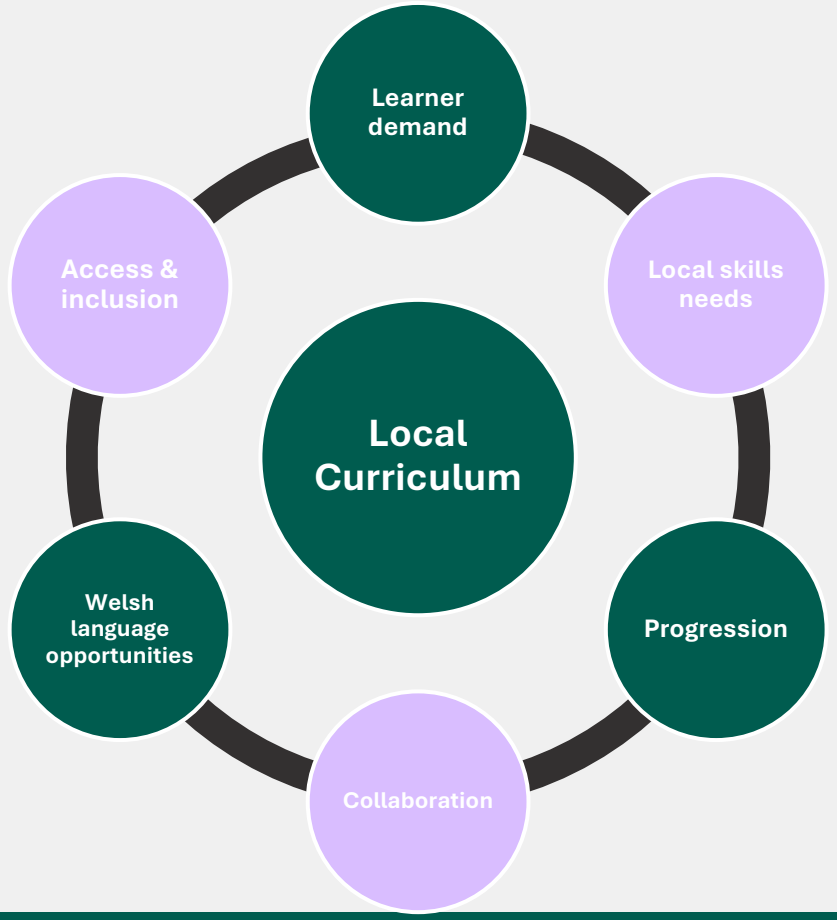
Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

Local Curricula Formation in Practice

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

What is a local curriculum?

A local curriculum is the shared learning offer available to learners across a local area. It is formed through local collaboration between schools, colleges, local authorities and Medr to secure access to a **broad** range of both **academic** and **vocational** learning opportunities, regardless of where they study.



A local curriculum is not:

- A single institution's curriculum
- A Medr-directed list of courses
- A school reorganisation tool
- A replacement for local decision making

How will the 1st cycle work?

Phase 1: Establishing the Baseline for (2027/28)

Curriculum planners and partners will work together to inform:

- Curriculum offer for 2027/28
- Learner demand & learner voice
- Welsh-medium provision
- Collaboration arrangements

Phase 2: Medr Review

Medr will:

- Analyse submissions
- Review breadth and learner access
- Identify strengths
- Identify gaps and opportunities

Phase 3: Local discussion with curriculum planners & partners

Medr will:

- Share analysis and key findings
- Discuss strengths and areas for development
- Seek local insight and challenge
- Consider opportunities to strengthen learner entitlement
- Explore collaborative solutions to identified gaps
- Agree next steps with local partners

Phase 4: Refinement (2028/29)

Partners will:

- Refine local curriculum arrangements using the evidence gathered.

Supporting the Work Through Intelligence Dashboards

Building a Shared Evidence Base

A strong local curriculum requires a shared understanding of provision, demand and opportunity.

Medr will develop intelligence dashboards to support:

- Visibility of planned provision across Wales
- Understanding of curriculum breadth across learning domains
- Analysis of learner participation and progression
- Welsh-medium planning and access
- Identification of gaps, overlaps and opportunities
- More informed local and national discussions

The Purpose of the Dashboard

- The dashboard is **not** intended to:
- Rank providers
- Create a performance league table
- Determine individual provider curriculum offers
- Drive institutional reorganisation

The Purpose is to:

- Support evidence-informed conversations
- Improve understanding of local curriculum arrangements
- Enable stronger collaboration
- Help Medr fulfil its statutory responsibilities

A shared evidence base supports better decisions for learners.

Medr

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

Sixth Form Reorganisation

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

A Second Statutory Responsibility

Proposals for restructuring sixth from provision Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022_Schedule 4_paragragh 4

- Chapter 3A gives Medr formal powers to initiate, consider & support sixth form reorganisation proposals
- Applies to LA maintained & voluntary/foundation schools. We may require:
  - A local authority to bring forward proposals to establish or close a school that is solely sixth-form provision, or to expand or reduce existing sixth form capacity.
  - The governing body of a voluntary or foundation school to propose changes to its sixth form provision.
- Welsh Ministers retain final approval in contested cases
- Sixth forms are now part of a national, strategically planned tertiary system

A Second Statutory Responsibility

Medr's role as a statutory consultee

- Chapter 3A of the Act, Section 63D(2)
- Any proposer of changes to sixth form provision in LA maintained & voluntary/foundation schools must consult Medr when proposing to:
  - Establish or close sixth forms
  - Increase or decrease sixth form capacity
  - Change of language designation
- Medr's role is to assess the potential impact of proposals which forms a mandatory part of the decision-making process

Relationship with school organisation

Local curriculum formation and school organisation are separate statutory processes.

Local Curriculum Planning

Focuses on:

- Learner entitlement
- Curriculum access
- Collaboration
- Planning

School Organisation

Focuses on:

- Structural change
- Statutory consultation
- Formal decision-making processes

Shared Evidence Base

Both draw on:

- Learner demand
- Progression data
- Welsh-medium opportunities
- Community needs

Curriculum evidence may inform local strategic discussions but does not automatically lead to school reorganisation proposals.

Medr

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

Looking Ahead

Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

Developing Arrangements Together

2026/27 Establish the Baseline

Planning templates distributed - **Nov 27th 2026**

Completed templates returned to Medr – **Feb 19th 2027**

Medr Analysis – **Mar 2027**

Initial local curricula planner discussions – **Apr 2027**

WG 16-18 policy guidance for Medr published

2027/28 Development & Co-design

Engagement with the sector

Consultation Medr 16-18 policy

Operational guidance development

Refinement of arrangements

2028/29 Full Implementation

Local curricula operating within agreed arrangements

Ongoing monitoring and support

Key Messages

Five Things to Remember

1. The Learner - Local curricula exist to support learner entitlement, not institutional structures.

2. Responsibility now sits with Medr - Medr has the statutory responsibility to:

- Form local curricula.
- Promote Welsh-medium provision.
- Support learner entitlement.
- Provide assurance and oversight.

But Medr cannot do this without local partners.

3. Local Curricula are formed through partnership - Local Authorities, schools and FEIs all have a critical role.

- Local Authorities bring local intelligence and facilitate localengagement..
- Schools bring learner insight and delivery expertise.
- FEIs bring specialist curriculum and skills expertise.

No single organisation can deliver learner entitlement alone.

4. This is not school reorganisation Local curriculum planning and reorganisation are distinct statutory processes.

5. Year 1 is about understanding - Our initial focus is to: Establish a baseline, Understand the local curriculum offer, Build a shared evidence base and Identify strengths, gaps and opportunities.

The objective is to support continuous improvement through evidence and collaboration.

Continuing the Conversation

- Contact: performanceandcoordination@medr.cymru

- **Carly Davies** (Head of Performance & Coordination): Carly.Davies@medr.cymru
- **Darren Phillips** (Senior Provider Performance Manager): Darren.Phillips@medr.cymru
- **Hannah Carlson** (Provider and Performance Manager): Hannah.Carlson@medr.cymru
- **Tracy Jones** (Provider and Performance Manager): Tracy.Jones@medr.cymru