

Consultation on provider quality performance measures for tertiary education

Date: 20 October 2026

Reference: Medr/2026/50

To:

- Heads of tertiary education providers in Wales
- Current and potential apprenticeship providers in Wales
- Provider/ Employer representative bodies
- Learner representative bodies
- Local authority education representatives for Adult Community Learning (ACL) and sixth form provision
- Headteachers of local authority maintained sixth forms
- Other interested parties

Respond by: 9 December 2026

More information: quality@medr.cymru

Summary:

This consultation seeks views on Medr's proposed quality performance measures for tertiary education and training providers in Wales. We will begin to phase in our use of the Measures from May 2027, based on the data available to us at that point. All tertiary education and/or training providers, representative bodies and other stakeholders are invited to respond.

Introduction

1. Under the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022 Medr has a duty to monitor and promote improvement in the quality of education provided by or on behalf of registered providers, and that funded or otherwise secured by Medr (section 51).
2. Medr's [regulatory framework](#) sets out the Conditions of Registration and Funding that providers must meet. These conditions form the core requirements for compliance and apply across the tertiary education sector. They include the [condition for quality and continuous improvement](#), which requires registered and/or funded providers to demonstrate that their provision, including that delivered on their behalf, is of good quality and that they engage with continuous improvement. This supports delivery of Strategic Aim 3 of Medr's [Strategic Plan](#), i.e. *to ensure learners receive the highest-quality provision in a tertiary education sector that strives for continuous improvement*.
3. The Quality and Continuous Improvement condition states that one of the compliance requirements is to have acceptable performance data. The [Quality Framework](#) notes that by 2027 Medr expects to have reviewed data collection arrangements and consulted on performance measures and the use of benchmarking. This document provides that consultation. It sets out Medr's proposals for provider quality performance measures across tertiary education, which will form part of our regulatory monitoring.
4. The measures set out in this document are designed to inform our understanding of provider performance in relation to quality and continuous improvement.
5. These measures will support wider monitoring of areas such as Welsh medium, equalities, participation, and access to tertiary education. Medr will also carry out separate work on setting out and measuring organisational metrics against our [long-term ambitions, which will take account of these areas](#).

Aim of consultation and rationale

6. The proposals aim to enable Medr to achieve consistency in how we assess compliance of the tertiary education sector with the quality and continuous improvement condition. They will support us doing this in a holistic manner and will support a shared contextual understanding of performance. Where possible, this will replace existing publications, in order to streamline reporting.
7. The proposals also aim to support providers in conducting self-evaluation and identifying priorities for continuous improvement, as set out in the Quality Framework. This will help providers assure themselves that they meet the requirements of the Quality and Continuous Improvement condition.
8. Finally, the proposals aim to ensure that external quality assessment is informed by a set of data that is available to all parties.
9. **Annex A** provides a set of Frequently Asked Questions in relation to performance data.

Principles

10. We propose the following principles to guide us in this work:

- i) Transparency – We aim to publish data at provider level, using dashboards to enable interrogation of data. Detail on the level of data to be published is included in this consultation.
- ii) Benchmarking – Measures will be benchmarked as far as possible, to enable assessment of whether performance is as expected in relation to a provider's peers.¹
- iii) Minimisation of burden – Analysis and production of measures will be based on existing data collections wherever possible and will be in line with good data management (including collect once and use many times), to minimise burden. We will give other agencies and/or regulators (e.g., Estyn/ QAA) access to data and analysis where appropriate, subject to data-sharing agreements.
- iv) Contextualisation – Outcomes from the measures will normally trigger a conversation in the first instance, to facilitate contextualisation and understanding of trends. This, together with triangulation with other information sources, will be used to determine whether Medr needs to take any intervention.
- v) Continuous improvement – The performance measures will be used by Medr and providers to inform and drive continuous improvement.

Questions	
Q1	Do these principles provide clarity on how Medr will use performance measures? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.

Information currently published

11. Medr receives information from tertiary education providers via a number of data collections and information requests. These are used to calculate funding allocations, monitor progress, inform policy, and publish official statistics on the tertiary education sector in Wales. Medr is not proposing to make changes to the collection of data at this time.
12. Data from learning providers delivering further education (FE), apprenticeships and adult community learning (ACL) is gathered via the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR). The LLWR also collects data on provision, such as Junior Apprenticeships, which isn't within scope of this consultation. The Post-16 Data Collection covers learning undertaken in school sixth forms. Learner outcome reports are publicly available for apprenticeship providers and ACL partnerships. Provider level data is not currently published for further education and sixth forms.
13. Data about higher education students is collected from higher education providers on Medr's behalf by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Data and

¹ For HE, this is UK-wide; for other parts of the tertiary education sector, other Welsh providers are the comparators.

analysis are publicly available via [HESA open data](#) and available through [Heidi Plus](#) for subscribers. [National Student Survey](#) data is published on the Office for Students (OfS) website.

14. Based on these datasets, Medr [publishes a range of outputs](#) related to quality, including the post-16 consistent performance measures for further education and sixth forms, the learner outcome measures for apprenticeships and adult community learning, and the National Measures for higher education².
15. Medr also publishes a broad range of data on the Welsh Government's [StatsWales](#) website. This is an official open data service that provides access to official statistics and data for Wales.

Performance measures

16. Medr will consider data in relation to a range of outcomes to determine any risk to the quality of tertiary education, using existing data where available. The Quality Framework sets out the data that will be considered and includes: recruitment, progression, retention, completion (including achievement of qualifications), regulatory concerns raised with Medr (including numbers and patterns), learner surveys (providers' internal surveys, National Student Survey, Learner Voice Survey³, as applicable) and destinations (employment/ education/ training).
17. **Annex B** provides technical descriptions of how we propose to extract data from the data sources and calculate the measures. It also provides a definition of each measure.
18. A summary of the measures, including where they will be benchmarked and the Quality Framework strand(s) each relates to, is provided below. While recruitment data is included in the measures, it will not be used for interventions relating to quality, as these data are not an indicator of the quality of provision, but provide useful context.

Apprenticeships

Measure		Benchmarked	Quality framework strand
A1	Number of fundable learning programme starts	No	Recruitment
A2	Percentage of learners who achieve their full apprenticeship framework	Yes	Completion, learner outcomes
A3	Percentage of apprenticeship learning activities successfully completed	Yes	Learner outcomes
A4	Percentage of learners with a sustained destination	Yes	Destinations
A5	Overall learner satisfaction	Yes	Learner Voice

² National measures will be phased out as strategic plan measures are developed in consultation with providers, and these will be taken into account as part of our provider risk assessment process

³ For implementation through 2026/27

Further education institutions and sixth forms

Measure		Benchmarked	Quality framework strand
F1	Number of fundable full-time learning programme starts	No	Recruitment
F2	Percentage of learners who complete their full-time AS level programme	Yes	Completion
F3	Percentage of learners who return to take a full-time A level programme after completing their full-time AS level programme	Yes	Retention
F4	Percentage of learners who complete their full-time A level programme	Yes	Completion
F5	Percentage of learners that achieve at least 3 A levels (or equivalent)	Yes	Learner outcomes
F6	Percentage of learners who complete their full-time vocational programme	Yes	Completion
F7	Percentage of main qualifications undertaken as part of full-time vocational learning programmes that were successfully attained	Yes	Learner outcomes
F8a F8b	Percentage of learners with a sustained destination: a – general education b – vocational	Yes	Destinations
F9	Overall learner satisfaction ⁴	Yes	Learner Voice

Adult community learning

Measure		Benchmarked	Quality framework strand
C1	Number of learning activity starts	No	Recruitment
C2	Percentage of learning activities completed	Yes	Completion
C3	Percentage of assessable learning activities successfully completed	Yes	Learner outcomes
C4	Overall learner satisfaction	Yes	Learner Voice

⁴ For sixth forms, this measure is subject to successful pilot and implementation of the Learner Voice Survey.

Higher Education

Measure		Benchmark	Quality framework strand
H1	The number of enrolments by mode, level, domicile and subject	No	Recruitment
H2	The proportion of full-time first-degree enrolments completing or progressing to the next year of their course	Yes	Progression, Retention, Completion
H3	a) The proportion of full-time undergraduate entrants completing or progressing one year following entry b) The proportion of part-time first-degree entrants completing or progressing two years following entry	Yes	Progression, Retention
H4	Degree classification outcomes by academic year for first degree qualifiers	No ⁵	Learner Outcomes
H5	Proportion of leavers who studied undergraduate qualifications gaining the aimed-for qualification	Yes	Progression, Retention, Completion, Learner outcomes
H6	a) The proportion of graduates in employment and/or study 15 months after graduating b) The proportion of graduates in work that are in professional or managerial jobs 15 months after graduating	Yes	Destinations
H7	Overall student satisfaction	Yes (already calculated in outputs on OfS website)	Learner Voice

19. For apprenticeships and ACL, the publication of the measures will replace the existing Learner Outcome Reports and LLWR-Inform benchmarking reports. The data reconciliation cycle for apprenticeships and ACL will continue and be adapted as necessary. For FE and sixth forms, the benchmarking approach proposed here will replace the current demographic benchmarks for the achievement measure. We will also consider how best to adapt the current provider reports.
20. For the HE measures, we will provide the raw data behind the calculation of the measures with each measure, to individual providers only. Once the outcomes of the consultation have been taken into account and the measures finalised, we propose to calculate provider performance measures H1, H2, H4 and H5 through the HESA IRIS system during the HESA student record submission process. This is likely to be phased over 2026/27 and 2027/28 academic year returns with inclusion of measures that require more than one year of data likely to take longer to be implemented via IRIS. Details of the extraction methods for all higher

⁵ We are not proposing to benchmark degree classification outcomes. This is because of the recognised issue of grade inflation and to avoid any unintended consequences of formally flagging outcomes that are different to their benchmark. We will still examine the data and use it for dialogue with providers where appropriate.

education measures will be included in the annual [higher education data requirements publication](#).

Questions	
Q2	Do the quality performance measures collectively provide a good basis to inform our wider monitoring of provider performance (and compliance) against our conditions of registration or funding and our understanding of provider risk? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.
Q3	Do the quality performance measures collectively provide a good basis to support continuous improvement activity? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details, indicating the measures to which you are referring.
Q4	Are the extraction criteria and methodology used to calculate these quality performance measures, as set out in Annex B , appropriate? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details, indicating which measures you are referring to in your response.

Benchmarks

21. We propose using benchmarks to enable fairer and more meaningful comparisons between providers and with the tertiary education sector more broadly. A benchmark is an adjusted average that takes into account the characteristics of its learners.
22. Providers attract different types of learners who are largely self-selecting. Factors such as qualifications on entry, subject studied, age, ethnicity, sex, deprivation, and other background characteristics can affect outcomes and are generally outside a provider's control.
23. Because of these differences, comparing providers directly or against a simple sector (or part of the sector) average is not always fair. Benchmarks account for these factors, allowing more meaningful comparisons.
24. Comparing a provider's performance with its benchmark helps show whether it is performing better or worse than expected. Providers with similar benchmarks are usually more comparable, while large differences in benchmarks suggest that direct comparisons may be less meaningful.
25. As noted in the principles above, data will be the starting point for a conversation. Medr will therefore use consideration of trends and performance against benchmarks, to inform discussions with providers in the first instance.
26. We propose to use + or – to indicate where outcomes are statistically significantly above or below benchmark.
27. Information on the methodology and a worked example are provided at **Annex C**.

Questions	
Q5	Do you agree that the benchmarking methodologies outlined are appropriate? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.
Q6	Is our proposed use of +/- signifiers to indicate provider performance that is statistically significantly above or below benchmark appropriate? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.

Proposed approach to publication

28. We propose publishing dashboards of measures which will include provider benchmarks. We will also include subject level analysis.
29. We also propose to publish measures on StatsWales at subject level, and by learner characteristics, language of study and other factors. This will enable data to be interrogated by additional parameters, to enable its use for a range of purposes, including for providers to track and compare their performance against the measures.
30. **Annex D** provides dummy data for each part of the sector. This demonstrates how the measures, together with their benchmarks and the +/- indicators will appear when published at provider level.
31. Separately, we will share providers' data with them privately for the purposes of this consultation, to show how it will appear using this approach (see Next Steps for further information).
32. In publishing figures, whether in tables or in a dashboard, we will apply our usual data disclosure methods to avoid any identifiable data being published.
33. This approach will ensure that data is available to all tertiary education providers and stakeholders at an appropriately granular level, and that bodies carrying out external quality assessment (particularly Estyn and QAA) are using the same dataset to inform their engagements with providers.
34. Medr will consider provider quality performance measures holistically and in the context of the part of the tertiary education sector in which a provider is based.
35. Where a provider is significantly below benchmark, we will investigate the data at a more granular level of detail to identify where there may be issues with quality performance.
36. In line with the principles set out above, and Medr's regulatory framework, where we have concerns, we will work with the provider to understand the context and background to the data to understand underlying reasons for performance.
37. We will then triangulate this with the outcomes of external quality assessment and other information, to determine whether or not we need to undertake further

engagement with providers. This could include promotion of good practice, or regulatory follow-up, as appropriate.

Questions	
Q7	Will this approach to data publication support its use for continuous improvement? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.

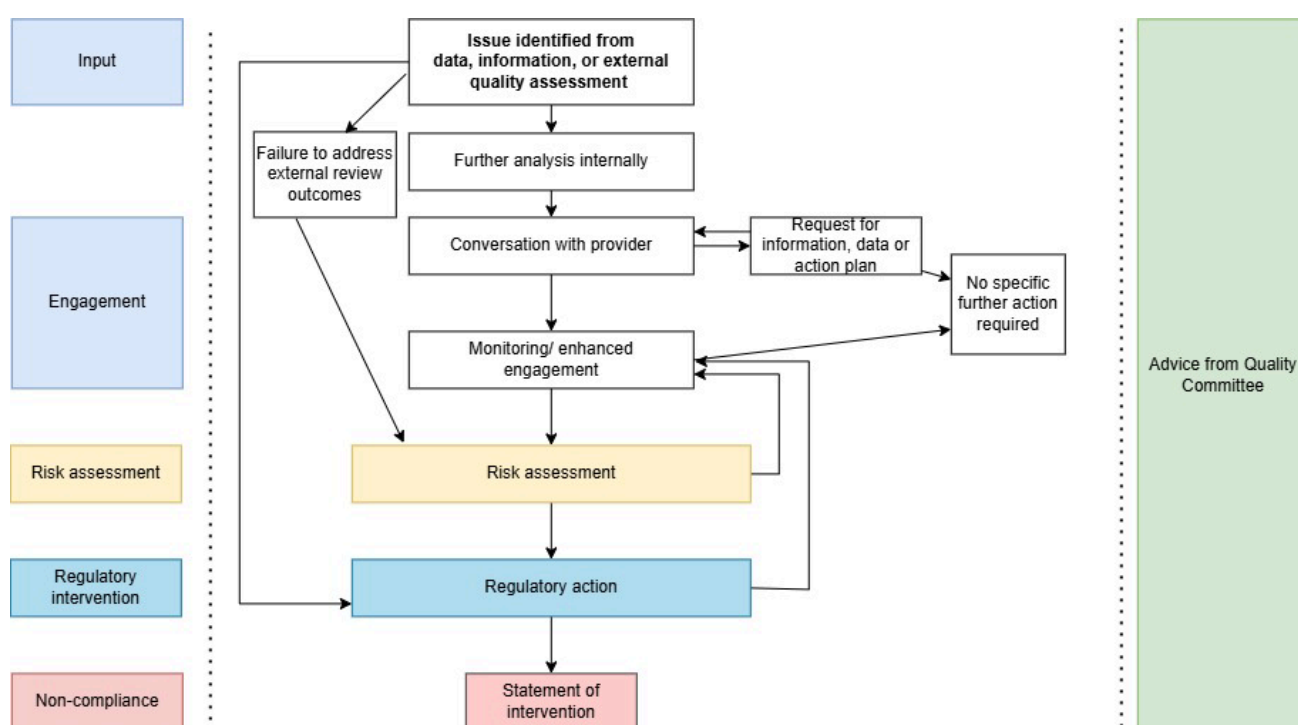
Future measures

38. Medr will be developing and introducing further quality measures in due course. In particular this includes the outcomes of the Learner Voice Survey (for those learners outside of the NSS), which will start to operate in 2026/27. We are also considering how better to measure learner progression through tertiary education. In addition, Medr will consider whether the measures for apprenticeships will need to be updated in light of arrangements for the new programme, to include consideration of degree apprenticeships.
39. Medr will evaluate the implementation of these performance measures and keep them under review. We will be transparent about any changes to methodology or benchmarking. We will engage with the sector before adding any new quality measures to the dashboards, including undertaking formal consultation as necessary.

Use of quality performance measures

40. As noted above, Medr proposes to use consideration of quality performance measures against benchmarks and trends, to inform a conversation with providers to contextualise the data. This will also help us to understand continuous improvement priorities across the sector. This will feed into Medr's wider analysis of performance information to form an integrated assessment of provider compliance with the regulatory framework, and inform Provider Risk Assessment.
41. Medr will engage in informal conversations about data as part of its routine engagement with providers. Such engagements may occur throughout the year. Medr will prioritise conversations where data raises specific concerns.
42. Diagram 1 below illustrates how we will propose to use data in determining whether, and if so what, regulatory interventions should be taken in respect to quality and continuous improvement.

Diagram 1:



43. This is not a simple binary decision. We will use contextual information to help us understand provider performance and will triangulate with other information such as external quality assessment outcomes, information (as set out in the Quality Framework), and compliance with other conditions of funding/ registration. Dependent on the nature and severity of the issue raised, we may skip steps in the diagram above or undertake stages in a different order.
44. This information will be fed into Medr’s Provider Risk Assessment process, which will be subject to consultation by spring 2027.

Questions	
Q8	Does our approach provide sufficient clarity on our proposed use of the quality performance measures? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.
Q9	Are there any unintended consequences regarding Medr’s proposed use of quality performance measures? Yes / No. Please provide details.

Welsh language

45. Our Strategic Plan commits to encouraging greater use of the Welsh language in tertiary education, increasing demand for and participation in learning and assessment through the medium of Welsh. To support this strategic aim, we are developing a National Plan for the Welsh Language in Tertiary Education which will be published by April 2027 and implemented from September 2027.

46. The National Plan will be a strategic plan that translates Medr's Welsh-language duties into clear expectations for the tertiary sector. It aims to strengthen and promote Welsh-medium education, support cross-sector collaboration, and enable more coherent learner pathways. The Plan will support a system in which all learners can develop, maintain, and use their Welsh language skills throughout their tertiary education journey, equipping them to use those skills in the workplace and everyday life.
47. Quality and continuous improvement are equally important in Welsh-medium and English-medium provision. Where the availability and robustness of the data allow, we intend to present and analyse the quality performance measures by language of study. This will allow Medr and providers to identify trends, differences, and similarities in the experiences and outcomes of Welsh-medium learners compared with their English-medium counterparts, and to respond as necessary.
48. This analysis will support the fulfilment of our strategic duties and continuous improvement in Welsh-medium provision. However, these measures are designed to assess quality and are not intended to measure progress against the National Plan. Medr will undertake separate work to develop an appropriate framework for measuring progress against the Plan.
49. In answering the following questions, please consider impacts on opportunities to use Welsh and on treating Welsh no less favourably than English.

Questions	
Q10	What positive or negative effects might our proposals have on the Welsh language?
Q11	What additional actions could increase positive effects on the Welsh language?
Q12	What additional actions could prevent or reduce any negative effects on the Welsh language?

Well-being of Future Generations

50. This consultation seeks views on the impact of this consultation on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

Questions	
Q13	Will the proposals contribute to the achievement of the national well-being goals set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.

Equality and well-being

51. Medr has a duty to promote Equality of Opportunity across aspects of tertiary education. Equality of Opportunity relates to under-represented groups in the context of participation, retention, attainment and success. The Act defines under-

represented learners in tertiary education as being those disadvantaged as a result of social, cultural, economic or organisational factors. Our overall approach to the consideration of data will include mode, language of study and learner demographics.

Questions	
Q14	Do the proposals take account of the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.
Q15	Do the proposals take account of the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.
Q16	Do the proposals take account of the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it? Yes / No / Partially. Please provide details.
Q17	Do the proposals have any positive or negative impacts, or unintended consequences, in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion?

Next steps

52. Individual provider data for FE colleges and apprenticeship providers will be uploaded by Medr to the existing secure file sharing sites for each provider. Medr will contact ACL partnerships by email. If these providers require any changes to nominated contact(s) that need to have access to the provider data, these can be requested by emailing statistics@medr.cymru. Provider data for sixth forms will be shared via DEWi. Individual higher education data for HE providers will be uploaded by Medr to the secure file sharing sites that exist for each provider, and will be saved in a 'Performance Measures' folder. HE providers must nominate a contact(s) to access the data, by emailing HEstats@medr.cymru by 31 October 2026.
53. We will aim to publish the outcomes of the consultation, along with our decisions, in spring 2027. We will begin to phase in our use of the Measures from May 2027, based on the data available to us at that point, with the following exceptions:
 - The learner destinations measures for FE, sixth forms and apprenticeships, which have an inherent time lag, will be used from the 2024/25 reporting cycle (expected to be published in October 2027);
 - The Learner Voice Survey measures will be used from the 2027/28 reporting cycle.
54. This means that as data becomes available it will be added to the dashboards. The data cycle is set out below.

55. The quality performance measures will inform quality processes from the time of their publication in the dashboards. In the interim, Medr will continue to analyse data in line with current processes.
56. The table below provides an indicative publication cycle for the proposed set of indicators. We will publish indicators as soon as possible once complete, finalised datasets are available. For H2, H3(a), H3(b), H5, H6(a) and H6(b) we are in discussion with HESA regarding the production of benchmarking so the publication timetable is not yet defined. Publication dates may differ depending on data availability and any changes will be communicated to stakeholders:

Month	Indicators published
October	For the cohort in learning, three academic years prior: F8, A4
February	For the previous academic year: A2, A3, C2, C3, H1, H4
March	For the previous academic year: F1 to F7, A1, C1
June	For the current academic year (provisional timings): F9, A5, C4
July	For the current academic year: H7

Responses

57. You can find a copy of the consultation questions at **Annex E**. Please respond via the [online form](#) by 9 December 2026.
58. We welcome responses in Welsh or English.

Further information

59. Any queries regarding this consultation should be directed to quality@medr.cymru.

Impact Assessment

60. Our initial impact assessment has identified that there will likely be a positive, indirect, impact on learners as a result of our proposals, through improvements made by providers in respect of quality (where needed), as well as engagement with continuous improvement activity.
61. We have identified the following as particular areas for review which we will consider as part of the development of the measures:
- Providers collect different levels of detail on protected characteristics and socio-economic indicators. Greater consistency at an all-Wales level will support clearer analysis of disparities and intersectional impacts.
 - The visibility of franchised delivery varies across providers. A clearer, more consistent approach to data visibility will support transparency, risk assessment and information for learners.
 - Intersectional patterns of disadvantage are not well captured. Improved data oversight would support more robust analysis of overlapping characteristics.

- All-Wales provider datasets often lack robust geographic breakdowns. More granular information is needed to understand data-based patterns in access, continuation and engagement.

Medr

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

www.medr.cymru

2 Cwr y Ddinas
Stryd Tyndall
Caerdydd
CF10 4BZ

2 Capital Quarter
Tyndall Street
Cardiff
CF10 4BZ



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government