Medr

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

Apprenticeship Programme in Wales Grant Application: Frequently Asked Questions

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

The final date for submitting questions relating to the Stage 2 Grant Application process is 11 December 2026

Section	FAQ Reference
1. Applicant Eligibility and Delivery Models	No new questions
2. Application Process, Requirements and Evidence	2.14
3. Collaborative Delivery, Partnerships and Subcontracting	No new questions
4. Conditions of Funding	No new questions
5. Degree Apprenticeships	No new questions
6. Funding and Grant Allocations	6.8, 6.9, 6.10
7. General	No new questions
8. Performance and Learner Outcomes	8.3, 8.4, 8.5
9. Programme Delivery and Qualifications	9.7
10. Provider Network, Learner Transition and Programme Review	10.2
11. Sectors, Regions and Delivery Arrangements	No new questions
12. Shared Apprenticeships	12.5, 12.6

1. Applicant Eligibility and Delivery Models

1.1. How will continuing learners be managed where a subcontractor becomes a direct grant recipient?

Prioritising continuity of learning and minimising disruption to learners and employers is paramount to the implementation of the new Apprenticeship Programme from August 2027.

Medr's primary responsibility is to learners and ensure that the transition is managed lawfully, transparently and consistently, with appropriate regard to continuity of support, learner choice, equality impacts and the need to minimise disruption.

Therefore, Medr programme level policy is by default for a learner to continue with the provider currently delivering the support where the provider remains part of the delivery network. Continuity of delivery is key, under which learners ordinarily continue with the provider currently delivering support, while allowing learners to request transfer to another provider where appropriate and operationally feasible. Grant recipients must cooperate with learner transition, information transfer and mobilisation arrangements. Medr is unable to mandate particular delivery chains or recreate previous contractual models.

Medr's responsibility to an existing prime contractor is to manage the expiry of the existing contractual relationship in accordance with the contract and Exit Plan. Existing prime providers should cooperate with exit, handover, learner communication and information transfer arrangements. We will be writing to all prime providers shortly setting out the Programme's run down contract arrangements. Information on managing displaced learners is at Annex B of the Programme Guidance, sections 7.35 – 7.38.

1.2. Can Medr provide further clarity on how it will define and assess different provider types within the new grant model, including existing providers, new providers, subcontractors, collaborative partnerships and consortia?

All applications from all applicants will be assessed transparently, equally and consistently against the evidence contained within their application form, as outlined in Annex E Grant Assessment Framework and Scoring.

1.3. If a current subcontractor applies independently, how will it be classified and which funding thresholds will apply?

Any organisation that meets the eligibility criteria, regardless of status within the current commissioned programme, can make an application.

For Strand 1, for planning and assurance purposes, Medr expects applicants to be able to demonstrate capacity to manage a grant value of up to £5m per year, including new starts and continuing learners. This is a capability benchmark and does not guarantee an allocation of that amount. Actual annual grant allocations will be determined in accordance with the allocation methodology as outlined in paragraphs 6.10 – 6.12 and may be less than £5m. For new providers without continuing learners, Medr anticipates

that the minimum grant value in the first year will be £1.5m, subject to the allocation methodology, programme conditions and budget availability.

1.4. Are employers excluded from submitting a grant application?

No organisation is excluded from applying for a grant, providing they meet the eligibility criteria. All applicants will be assessed lawfully, equally, transparently and consistently.

2. Application Process, Requirements and Evidence

2.1. How will the 1000-word count be managed?

You will only be assessed on your response contained within the application up to the maximum word count of 1,000 words per question. Any response over 1,001 will not be taken into account.

2.2. Is there a word limit for the "Delivery Model" response per sector?

While there is no word limit, responses should be focused, relevant, and expressed clearly and succinctly.

2.3. Can you outline the process used to review and evaluate applications?

Stage 2 applications will be assessed against the published assessment criteria using the 0-5 scoring methodology. Assessment will consider the overall quality and strength of the evidence provided in response to each question. Individual programmes or pathways are not scored separately within a question. Instead, assessors will evaluate the response as a whole against the published criteria.

Question scores are combined into section scores, and section scores are weighted to produce an overall assessment score. Applicants should ensure their response provides sufficient and proportionate evidence to demonstrate their capability and approach across all proposed programmes and pathways included within the application.

2.4. What evidence will applicants be required to provide at Stages 1 and 2 of the application process? Will some sections be assessed on a declaratory basis?

Annex A the Apprenticeship Programme Grant Application outlines examples of evidence that will be assessed. There is a mix of narrative and declaratory information required.

2.5. What evidence will be required to demonstrate quality, apprenticeship delivery experience, geographical reach, employer engagement and sector expertise?

It is for applicants to consider appropriate evidence to support their application. Questions 5 and 6 of the Apprenticeship Programme Grant Application at Annex A

outlines examples of evidence that will be assessed. Annex E Grant Assessment Framework also provides additional guidance on the assessment framework and scoring.

2.6. Given that applications need to be submitted in a short period of time, if an organisation is not ready within the initial timeframe, when is the next window for application?

There will be a formal review of the programme at the four-year point which may lead to more major changes; it will also be an opportunity for further providers to apply to receive grant funding under the programme, subject to programme conditions and budget availability.

2.7. Do you have to complete all elements of the applications, regardless of whether they are scored or not.

All sections of the application form must be completed regardless of scoring as this provides key information about the provider, delivery arrangements and sector delivery.

2.8. Is there a minimum threshold quality score that bidders need to achieve either in total or for individual questions?

Stage 1 is a pass or fail. There is no published minimum Stage 2 quality threshold score, overall pass mark or minimum score for individual questions. Stage 2 applications are then assessed using the published criteria at Annex E.

2.9. Will links contained within the grant application response count towards the evaluation scoring?

You can include links within your answer to provide evidence on its contents. However, this should not be used instead of answering the question. The links will not be considered as part of the assessment scoring.

2.10. How will you check the validity of evidence stated by providers who are not currently prime providers?

All applicants, including organisations that are not currently prime providers, will be subject to the same Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessment requirements. Medr may request supporting evidence to validate statements made within applications and may seek clarification where necessary.

2.11. Will new providers be expected to have completed the assessments required within the regulatory framework conditions as part of the application process or when awarded?

The first stage establishes whether an applicant is eligible to receive public funding by confirming that it satisfies Medr's Conditions of Funding. All key information about the applicant and their ability to meet Medr's Conditions of Funding must be answered as part of the application process.

2.12. Can the same training provider provide support to the learner through Strand 3 Supported Apprenticeships also deliver the full apprenticeship framework to the learner?

Yes, providers can complete an application for both strands. Therefore, able to support the learner through Strand 3 Supported Apprenticeship and deliver the framework learning to the apprentice.

2.13. Who is responsible for undertaking due diligence on prospective partners?

Providers are responsible for deciding what due diligence is appropriate. Data which Medr holds relating to the financial sustainability and governance arrangements of providers is confidential and cannot be shared. Providers may need to request information directly from potential partners.

2.14. In Stage 2, Question 4, what is meant by "taking advantage of existing and new technologies", and what examples would Medr expect applicants to consider in their delivery approach?

The purpose of this question is to understand how applicants will respond to evolving skills needs and make effective use of innovation and technology to support high-quality, flexible apprenticeship delivery. This may include the use of existing and emerging technologies to enhance learner engagement, improve accessibility, increase efficiency, and strengthen the learner and employer experience. Applicants should focus on the technologies and innovations that are relevant and appropriate to their proposed delivery model.

3. Collaborative Delivery, Partnerships and Subcontracting

3.1. Will the new grant model operate in a similar way to current arrangements, allowing collaborative delivery through subcontracting, partnerships or consortia? If so, what requirements apply regarding legal structure, accountability and the presentation of these arrangements within the application?

Yes. Medr encourages collaborative delivery arrangements, including subcontracting, partnerships, consortia and other collaborative models across all programme strands. These arrangements are intended to support delivery at sufficient scale across Wales, ensuring coverage across sectors and regions while maintaining high-quality apprenticeship provision. This may include working with specialist employer-led organisations where such partnerships support employer engagement, learner progression and high-quality apprenticeship delivery.

Medr has not prescribed or defined specific legal structures for these arrangements. It is the responsibility of applicants to determine and describe their proposed delivery model and governance arrangements within their application.

The organisation that receives the Grant Award funding, as the prime provider, holds overall accountability and contractual responsibility for delivery. This includes

responsibility for managing governance, performance, quality assurance and relationships with any subcontractors or partner organisations.

Where delivery is undertaken through subcontractors or partners, it is the responsibility of the prime contractor to determine the appropriate arrangements and undertake any necessary due diligence checks. The prime contractor remains accountable for the quality, management and oversight of all provision funded through the grant award

3.2. Can Medr clarify the distinction between a prime provider with subcontractors, a collaborative partnership and a consortium?

It is the applicant's responsibility to decide and indicate their own proposed legal structure. Medr has not defined this. Medr directly funds the prime provider through the grant award. The Prime provider manages the relationship and governance arrangements with their sub-contractors or partnering organisations.

3.3. Is it possible for a university and training provider to apply with the university as prime, with a view to then delivering a full pathway, level 2 to 6?

Medr encourages collaborative arrangements, including consortium or partner organisation models, including sub-contracting models for providers applying to deliver each strand of the programme.

3.4. How will Medr distinguish between subcontractor performance and the quality assurance and support provided by prime contract holders?

It will be the responsibility of the Grant Award Holder to monitor and assure the quality of all subcontracted delivery, and to have appropriate arrangements in place to enable them to do this. Where a Grant Award Holder identifies issues with individual subcontractors that impacts on the overall programme performance, Medr will take these factors into consideration, subject to provision of information as to how these issues will be addressed under the new arrangements. Providers should include this information within the application and any action they took to improve outcomes/performance.

3.5. If an applicant was operating as a sub-contractor how would you assess their past performance?

We recognise that, under the current subcontracting model, learner outcomes and wider performance measures may have been achieved within a framework of support, oversight and quality assurance provided by a directly funded prime provider and outcomes impacted by performance of a range of delivery agents. As such, we do not assume that an applicant's historical performance data alone demonstrates its ability to operate successfully as a directly funded provider.

3.6. Do all partners/collaborators need to be confirmed at stage 1, and can changes be made to delivery models and regions (and partners) at stage 2?

Applicants are asked at Stage 1 to include their proposed delivery model (e.g. consortium arrangement or prime provider with subcontracting) and to provide details of proposed

subcontractors or consortium members, together with details of the due diligence undertaken on those organisations. However, we understand these may change and can be updated with regions and sector delivery as part of the stage 2 application process.

Prime providers can apply to add additional partners to their consortium arrangements over the life time of the four year grant.

3.7. Can a delivery partner be named in more than one application? And employers who are co-delivery partners with different training providers.

The prime contractor is responsible for determining its subcontracting arrangements and for carrying out appropriate due diligence checks to ensure that subcontractors meet the required standards and obligations.

3.8. Will Medr publish the names and proposed sector and regional coverage of successful prime applicants, so specialist organisations can approach them about subcontracting or partnership opportunities before allocations are finalised?

The successful applicants will be published following the completion of the grant application process and all applicants have been informed.

3.9. Can a provider make an application as a consortium member or direct contract holder, and also be named as a subcontractor in another application?

A provider can be a subcontractor under a lead provider and a lead provider in its own right. The application form treats lead provider and subcontractor roles as properties of an application rather than organisational statuses.

Applicants are asked at Stage 1 to include their proposed delivery model (for example, a consortium arrangement or a lead provider with subcontracting arrangements) in Section 2 of the application form. This includes providing details of proposed subcontractors or consortium members, together with details of the due diligence undertaken on those organisations.

However, we understand these arrangements may change and can be updated alongside regional and sector delivery proposals as part of the Stage 2 application process.

Where delivery is undertaken through subcontractors or partners, it is the responsibility of the lead provider to determine the appropriate arrangements and undertake any necessary due diligence checks. The lead provider remains accountable for the quality, management and oversight of all provision funded through the grant award.

4. Conditions of Funding

4.1. We are an FE Institution who has received approval from Medr and is on the Higher Education Register. Does being on the HE Register exempt us from the entire Section 3, or only parts of this section?

Institutions that are already subject to Medr's Conditions of Funding should proceed directly to Section 4 and are not required to complete the questions within section 3.

4.2. If we are already an HEI receiving Medr funding for apprenticeship delivery, does this mean we will have already signed up to Medr conditions of funding?

Institutions that are already subject to Medr's Conditions of Funding should proceed directly to Section 4 and are not required to complete the questions within section 3.

4.3. For consolidated groups, and where the provision being applied for is only one area of the provider activity. Do you want the financials for the whole consolidated group or the organisation that is delivering apprenticeships in Wales.

On tab provider info, we ask for the whole group position in order to assess overall group sustainability (row 17) together with sufficient supplemental information to understand the relevant subsidiary / department (row 18).

4.4. Are these commercial learners? Are they to include consolidated?

This is a catch all for any other learners. If wider consolidated is separate, then these are not included. Relates to the provider (as long as we have sufficient information to separately identify the provider performance).

4.5. Will a standard Cyber Essentials certification be accepted as evidence of compliance with the information security requirements, or is Cyber Essentials Plus required?

A standard Cyber Essentials (CE) certification on its own is not sufficient, as it is based primarily on self-assessment and does not provide the independent technical assurance required.

However, applicants may use an alternative route by submitting:

- A current Cyber Essentials certificate; and
- A recent IT Health Check (ITHC) or penetration test report completed within the last 12 months.

The additional assessment must:

- Cover the systems and infrastructure supporting the apprenticeship programme.
- Be carried out by an independent CREST-approved provider.
- Demonstrate that all Critical vulnerabilities, and any relevant High vulnerabilities, have been remediated or formally risk accepted with appropriate mitigations.

Applicants using this approach should provide the assessment executive summary together with evidence of remediation actions. Medr may request further information as part of its assurance review.

4.6. Please explain the evaluation criteria Medr will use to determine a Stage 1 pass or fail for governance and management

The governance and management self-evaluation required in Stage 1 must set out provider's own views of the adequacy and effectiveness of its governance and management arrangements. In doing this the self-evaluation should draw on:

- compliance with the principles set out in the Governance and Management Condition:
    - Good Governance (as set out at paragraphs 1-4 of the Condition)
    - Governing Body (as set out at paragraphs 5-7 of the Condition)
    - Strategic Direction (as set out at paragraph 8 of the Condition)
    - Leadership and Management (as set out at paragraphs 9-12 of the Condition)
    - Stakeholders (as set out at Paragraph 13 of the Condition)
    - Financial Management (as set out at paragraphs 14-15 of the Condition)
    - Estates Management (as set out at paragraphs 16-18 of the Condition)
    - Assurance Environment (as set out at paragraphs 19-27 of the Condition)
- compliance with the appropriate governance code
- the most recent effectiveness review of the governing body and the actions taken in response to the report
- risk management tools and processes
- management of reportable events
- any other sources of data and assurance
- a robust and evidence-based self-evaluation process, and an Action Plan which identifies any gaps or areas for improvement and shows how these will be addressed (accompanying the self-evaluation). The Action Plan may be provided as a separate document.

In respect of evidence requirements, it will be for individual providers to determine what evidence they have to illustrate compliance with the above principles. Given the broad range of providers with vastly different corporate structures, missions and orders of scale, evidence may vary. Similarly, not all aspects of each of the areas listed above may be relevant to every provider.

There is no prescribed format for this self-evaluation, although the text should be structured clearly so that we may gauge the provider's views on its compliance with each of the above principles.

Medr officers will undertake an assessment of the self-evaluation based on the compliance requirements of the Governance and Management Condition. This assessment will be informed by the context, complexity, scale, and nature of a provider, alongside the potential impact on learners and public funds if there was non-compliance with the Condition.

In terms of our assessment, we would expect applicants to be able to demonstrate reasonable compliance with all relevant requirements at the point of application. However, we recognise that governance and management is complex and multi-faceted

and that there will always be areas for development. Consequently, we would expect that any areas of relative weakness identified by a provider are captured within the Action Plan. It will be for providers to determine the appropriate timescales for any actions. Where weaknesses are identified in a provider's self-assessment, we are only likely to determine that a provider is non-compliant where those governance and/or management weaknesses represent deficiencies posing a serious risk to public funds and/or learners.

4.7. How are independent audits or penetration tests conducted and shared with Medr?

Applicants may provide confirmation that independent audits and/or penetration tests are conducted, together with evidence that the testing has taken place. Given the sensitive nature of detailed security reports, Medr does not require applicants to provide full penetration test reports. However, applicants may be asked to provide a high-level summary of the outcomes and confirmation that any significant findings have been appropriately addressed.

4.8. Can Medr conduct audits or request assurance evidence during the grant award period?

Medr would generally expect assurance evidence to be sufficient. However, it reserves the right to request further information or undertake proportionate audit or assurance activities where necessary. The scope and approach would be discussed with the grant recipient, where appropriate.

5. Degree Apprenticeships

5.1. Can FE institutions apply for Strand 2?

Strand 2 covers provision which leads to a bachelor's degree at Level 6 on the CQFW, awarded by an organisation with degree awarding powers. The degree awarding body is ultimately responsible for the quality and academic standards of the provision and the application must therefore be led by the provider which holds this responsibility. We encourage universities, as degree awarding bodies, to work in partnership with further education colleges and independent training providers in the delivery of degree apprenticeships, to support wider access to degree level provision. We also encourage universities to consider where there may be progression routes from higher apprenticeships at levels 4 and 5 (and other vocational qualifications) into degree apprenticeships, in line with our principle of taking into account recognised prior learning wherever possible.

Inclusion on the Register of Higher Education Providers enables access to student finance for higher education provision, and eligibility for Medr's higher education and research and innovation funding under sections 88, 89 and 105 of TER(W). Apprenticeship provision at all levels is funded through section 104 and therefore is not related to inclusion on the Register. Inclusion on the Register does not confer degree awarding powers, for which a separate process is required.

5.2. Is it possible to do part time degree apprenticeships?

Yes degree apprenticeship can be completed between 3-5 years (usually a maximum of 360 credits). The exact balance of work and study is agreed between the apprentice's university or college. The published eligibility requirements state that apprentices must be employed for a minimum of 16 hours per week. Providers are therefore expected to ensure they comply with the employment and programme requirements set out in the guidance.

6. Funding and Grant Allocations

6.1. When can providers expect grant allocations to be confirmed?

Grant allocations is outlined in paragraphs 6.10-6.13 in Annex B of the grant application Pack. Grant allocations will be made following the grant award letter. Allocations are forecasted to be issued in April 2027.

6.2. Has Medr assessed the potential impact on provider allocations, learner volumes and overall sustainability if the number of grant recipients increases without a corresponding increase in the apprenticeship budget?

Allocations will ensure the grant provides coverage across all sectors and regions in Wales and supports high-quality delivery of the apprenticeship provision, including priority to continuing learners.

The grant minimum allocations are outlined in paragraph 17 in the publication.

6.3. How will growth opportunities, allocation adjustments and in-year changes be managed during the four-year grant period?

All allocations are dependent on budget, therefore, there is not a guaranteed budget entitlement for any applicant. In year growth opportunities or in year changes will be made on a number of decisions, these will include the capacity of providers to increase delivery, performance of providers, regional priorities and sector priorities. Once the applications have been assessed and the grant award letters have been issued to the successful providers, Medr will issue the grant allocations. This is planned to take place in April 2027.

6.4. Why do the minimum and maximum grant value thresholds not appear to apply consistently across all apprenticeship strands?

Each strand has been assessed individually, and the corresponding minimum and maximum thresholds have been determined based on that assessment.

For example, we would not be able to apply a minimum threshold of £5m to the degree apprenticeships strand as the current budget is £9,930,967. This would reduce the number of providers being able to deliver degree apprenticeships across Wales.

6.5. How much has been allocated to the Additional Costs Budget and would this part of the Apprenticeship Grant Award or an additional value?

Grant allocation methodology is outlined in paragraphs 6.10-6.13 in Annex B of the grant application Pack.

6.6. What is the allocation process for Strand 1?

The allocation process for strand 1 is outlined on Section 6.10-6.13 of Annex B (Programme Guidance) of the application pack.

Medr will provide a baseline grant allocation to providers meeting the programme conditions to enable them to plan resources and provision for the future and support financial viability. The grant allocation will be subject to Medr's budget allocation from Welsh Government.

The grant allocation will be based on:

- Indicative baseline allocation assumptions, including the capacity benchmark referred to in paragraph 1.4 of Annex B and the anticipated first-year allocation for new recipients, subject to the allocation methodology, programme conditions and budget availability.
- Number of continuing learners.
- Number of displaced learners (if any).
- New learner starts.
- Skills priorities as set out by Welsh Government.
- Regional economic needs.
- Additional costs budget allocation.

Providers will be able to manage their investment allocation flexibly to enable them to meet the expectations set out in the programme guidance.

6.7. Will existing providers receive the same level of funding as the current procured contracts?

To be considered for a grant award under strand 1, applicants must demonstrate that they have the capacity, either individually or through appropriate collaborative arrangements, to manage grant funding at sufficient scale to support the objectives of the programme, including being able to respond to changing priorities. For planning and assurance purposes, Medr expects applicants to be able to demonstrate capacity to manage a grant value of up to £5m per year, including new starts and continuing learners. This is a capability benchmark and does not guarantee an allocation of that amount. These figures are used to assess financial sustainability, delivery capacity and programme risk, and do not create any guarantee of, or entitlement to funding.

The allocations for all providers will be considered fairly (as outlined in Section 6.10-6.13 of Annex B), following the assessment of Stage 1 and Stage 2 and their subsequent outcomes. Allocations will be determined taking into account available funding, strategic priorities and programme objectives. Therefore, no existing provider is guaranteed a grant allocation at the same value as their current procured contract. The allocations will be determined after the assessment process has been completed.

6.8. In Stage 2, Question 16, is the requirement to manage potential displaced learners referring to receiving learners displaced from other providers, managing learners displaced from our own provision, or both?

The term displaced learners refers to learners who are no longer able to continue their apprenticeship with their current lead provider or subcontractor and therefore require transfer to an alternative lead provider or sub-contractor.

Applicants should describe how they would accommodate and support displaced learners from other providers or within their sub-contracting arrangements. Responses should demonstrate how continuity of learning would be maintained, learner progress protected, and disruption minimised. Applicants should also outline any arrangements and processes they would use to manage such transitions effectively. This should include learners displaced as a result of the transition to the new apprenticeship programme in 2027, or learners who are displaced during the period of the grant award due to changes at other providers.

6.9. Could Medr please give more detail on what would and wouldn't be an eligible cost that the Additional Costs Budget could be used for

Further guidance on the Additional Costs Budget, including eligible expenditure and operational arrangements, will be provided to successful applicants from April onwards.

6.10. Applicants are asked which regions they will deliver in, but not which sectors they will deliver for Strand 3, Supported Apprenticeships. Please can you clarify the expectation for this?

Supported Apprenticeship providers do not undertake the delivery of the apprenticeship frameworks to learners as they do with strand 1 or 2. The information Medr is requesting relates specifically to the delivery of apprenticeship frameworks and ensuring all sectors are covered.

7. General

7.1. Does the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) apply in respect of staff currently employed by providers under the procured contracts?

Whether TUPE may apply depends on the specific circumstances relating to the potential transfer. Recipients will be responsible for undertaking their own due diligence and obtaining their own independent legal advice, to determine the application, or otherwise, of TUPE to their circumstances.

8. Performance and Learner Outcomes

8.1. What performance measures and minimum expectations will apply under the new grant arrangements, particularly regarding timely completions, achievement rates, progression to employment and sustained outcomes?

Providers are required to comply with the Medr Condition: Quality and Continuous Improvement

It is expected that the individualised approach to programme duration will improve the timely progression rates.

The current achievement target will remain at 75%, although this will be kept under review and Medr may take appropriate action where thresholds are not met.

We will continue to work with providers and employers to support continuous improvement, strengthening progression opportunities and improving sustained outcomes for learners. Annex B 4.7 – 4.10 Learner outcomes

8.2. In relation to the outcomes in section 4.8 of Annex B 'Entry to sustained employment within four weeks of leaving', would this be measured from the point of completing the framework?

Yes, entry to sustained employment within four weeks of completing the framework

8.3. For Stage 2, Question 5, should applicants provide a single expected apprenticeship achievement rate across all proposed provision,?

Applicants may provide a single achievement-rate percentage for their overall apprenticeship delivery. Medr recognises that achievement rates vary across sectors and applicants should provide realistic, evidence-based forecasts that reflect their proposed provision. Applicants may provide a break-down if they wish.

Applicants will not be assessed solely on whether they propose a 75% achievement rate. Medr will consider the proposed figure in the context of the applicant's provision, current or comparable performance and plans for improvement. Applicants should demonstrate how they will work towards improving and sustaining learner outcomes over time.

8.4. In Stage 2, Question 6, does "self-evaluation findings" refer to an applicant's self-assessment process or to the wider Medr provider self-evaluation process?

Stage 2, Question 6 is intended to focus on applicants' self-assessment arrangements and quality improvement processes. For the purposes of this question, self-evaluation findings may be interpreted as findings arising from self-assessment and wider internal quality review activities. Applicants should explain how areas for improvement are identified, prioritised, actioned and monitored, and how self-assessment outcomes inform wider continuous improvement activities, such as quality improvement planning, target setting, performance monitoring and the sharing of good practice. The question is not

specifically seeking information on the wider Medr provider self-evaluation process, although applicants may reference wider self-evaluation activities where relevant.

8.5. For Strand 3, Supported Apprenticeships, will learners data be included/excluded from the framework success rate calculation if they do not enter an apprenticeship or would other performance metrics be applied? .

We would expect Strand 3 providers to work with learners within the 6-month period to prepare them to enter an apprenticeship. However, if they could not enter an apprenticeship, the data for strand 3 will remain separate from the performance measures for Strand 1. Performance metrics will not be applied to learners who do not progress onto a full apprenticeship programme. However, the initial assessment should clearly identify the learner's needs and set out an appropriate support plan to address any barriers to progression.

The six-month pre-apprenticeship programme is intended to prepare learners for progression into a full apprenticeship. Where a learner is unable to secure employment within the initial six-month period, a grace period may be applied (however no payment would be made to the provider during this time). Once employment (Apprenticeship) has been secured, the learner can re-engage with and continue the programme.

Any additional learning support identified during the pre-apprenticeship stage should continue, where appropriate, throughout the apprenticeship to ensure the learner is fully supported and has the best opportunity to achieve a successful outcome.
Providers should ensure that appropriate evidence is retained to demonstrate the assessment undertaken and the rationale for the learner's exit from the programme.

Question 4 of the Application Form asks How do you plan to enable learners to achieve excellent outcomes for learners in Wales? You should include information on what your plans are to support learners enter and sustain the apprenticeship as set out in the Programme Guidance and application form questions.

9. Programme Delivery and Qualifications

9.1. How will the new apprenticeship model support flexibility and responsiveness to employer and learner need?

See Annex A Apprenticeship Programme Grant Application Form Stage 2 and Annex B Section 3 Roles and Responsibilities.

As part of the application process, we are seeking information from applicants on how they would support employers and respond to economic needs flexibly.

9.2. What role will micro-credentials, Career Skills and other non-regulated learning play within future apprenticeship delivery?

Information on micro credentials is outlined in paragraphs 4.23-4.25 in Annex B of the grant application Pack.

Careers Skills and other non-regulated qualification will form part of the Apprenticeship framework.

Medr supports both the use of qualifications recognised through the CQFW and higher education qualifications that fall outside Qualifications Wales regulation as long as the qualifications meet legislative requirements. This will continue to be strengthened through the implementation of the grant.

9.3. Can Medr clarify the distinction between Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and Recognition of Prior Achievement (RPA)?

Prior achievement is successful completion of a full recognised qualification.

Prior learning may refer to partial completion or unaccredited learning.

We will only take RPA into account for funding purposes at this stage but would expect providers to take into account any RPL for the individual learning programme in terms of delivery. This is subject to change throughout the life of the grant

9.4. How will learner eligibility rules be future proofed against wider UK Government employment, welfare or skills initiatives?

If any eligibility rules change as a result of UK or WG skills programmes, providers will be informed and the Programme Guidance will be updated as appropriate.

9.5. Will the removal of needing to be on programme for 80% of the framework time be applied to learners that have signed up prior to the change?

Changes will be made from August 2027 for new learners.

9.6. In terms of promoting the Welsh language, will this include encouraging the learners to complete elements of their apprenticeship through the medium of Welsh or just promoting the language as a means of communication?

Promoting the Welsh language includes both supporting learners to develop, maintain and use their Welsh language skills and increasing opportunities for learners to undertake elements of their apprenticeship through the medium of Welsh where available. The programme guidance and application questions refer to increasing delivery and participation through the medium of Welsh, helping apprentices access Welsh-medium training and assessment opportunities, and supporting learners to develop confidence in using Welsh in their learning and employment.

9.7. In Stage 2, Question 5, what is meant by developing "coherent progression pathways that enable learners to achieve occupational competence"? Does this refer to progression to higher-level qualifications, progression within employment, or both?

The reference to ""coherent progression pathways that enable learners to achieve occupational competence"" is intended more broadly than progression to higher-level qualifications alone.

Applicants should describe how they will work collaboratively with other providers, employers and stakeholders to support learners to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to become fully occupationally competent and progress within their chosen career pathway.

The focus of the question is how collaborative arrangements will create clear and accessible learner journeys, avoid unnecessary duplication of provision, and support progression opportunities that meet the needs of learners, employers and the regional economy.

10. Provider Network, Learner Transition and Programme Review

10.1. The guidance refers to a formal review at the four-year point. How will this be managed?

Initial grant awards will be for a period of four years. Minor changes may be made to the programme guidance during the first four years to respond to changing circumstances. If providers continue to meet the programme's grant conditions and continue to be compliant with the requirements of Medr's regulatory framework, they will continue to receive investment following the initial award.

There will be a formal review of the programme at the four-year point which may lead to more major changes; it will also be an opportunity for further providers to apply to receive grant funding under the programme, subject to programme conditions and budget availability.

10.2. For the purposes of managing displaced learners, what does "provision offer" mean? Does this refer to the sectors and geographical areas a provider has proposed to deliver?

Your provision offer refers to the geographic areas, occupational sectors, and apprenticeship levels that you have proposed to deliver and for which you are awarded funding. Applicants should ensure that any references to their provision offer align with the regions, sectors and levels included within their award.

11. Sectors, Regions and Delivery Arrangements

11.1. For the Frameworks and Regions *for Proposed Delivery* section of Annex A (pages 11-12), should the questions listed on page 11 be answered within the table for each proposed sector/framework? Additionally, how should delivery be recorded where training and assessment take place at employer premises rather than provider facilities?

Responses may be combined where appropriate across sectors and/or regions, provided the information remains clear and demonstrates the applicant's capability to deliver the proposed provision. Applicants may also include any additional information they consider relevant.

11.2. The guidance states that no more than 50% of a provider's funded activity should be concentrated within a single sector. Is this an expectation or a mandatory requirement?

The programme must be able to respond to and meet regional economic and Welsh Government skills priorities, including responding to changing technologies and the need for green skills.

Providers must be able to demonstrate that they will use the grant funding to deliver the provision across a range of key sector areas, and that they are able to respond to changing priorities. Therefore, this is a requirement for the grant funding. Paragraphs 2.12-2.13 of Annex B provider further information.

11.3. How will Medr ensure sufficient flexibility where labour market evidence clearly demonstrates sustained demand, such as in Health & Social Care, in regards of no more than 50% delivery in a single sector?

The 50% requirement will be measured against the new learners starting on the grant programme, across all regions and pathways. This excludes continuing learners and any displaced learners. The 50% can be contributed to by a number of organisations as part of a consortium, partnership or sub-contracting models. It will be the responsibility of the prime provider to ensure compliance with this requirement across any consortium members and/or subcontractors involved in delivery. Medr will monitor compliance with this requirement throughout the duration of the grant award.

The grant minimum allocations are outlined in paragraph 17 in the publication. The guidance on the process, timing and criteria for obtaining approval to exceed 50% will be included as part of the implementation of the new programme guidance.

11.4. On the basis you have confirmed the broader scope of sector coverage scores higher, will it also apply that grant applications that cover all regions also score higher than others that don't?

Applications will be assessed against the published criteria and scoring methodology set out in Annex E. Assessment will consider the quality and strength of the evidence provided in response to each question, including the applicant's proposed delivery arrangements, sector coverage and ability to respond to regional and labour market needs. Applicants should focus on providing clear and credible evidence demonstrating how their proposed delivery model meets the assessment criteria and programme requirements.

11.5. When considering sectors, will Social care and Health care be seen separately?

The sector structure set out within the published documentation reflects the outcome of the apprenticeship consultation. Health, Social and Child Care is identified as a single sector framework within the published sector framework structure.

11.6. For Strand 3, does whole-region coverage require the applicant to have established premises or delivery staff in every local-authority area at the application stage, or can coverage be demonstrated through a mobile delivery model, employer locations and formally committed regional partners?

Applicants should demonstrate how they will provide delivery across the regions for which they are applying and how they will ensure learners and employers can access provision. This may include a range of delivery approaches, including collaborative arrangements, partner organisations, subcontracting arrangements and other delivery models that enable effective regional coverage. Applicants should ensure that their proposed delivery arrangements are clearly described within their application and demonstrate their capacity to deliver high-quality provision across the areas they propose to serve.

11.7. Where a provider/consortium has a focus on a single region but has sector specialisms which are delivered pan-Wales will this continue to be supported under the new programme?

At Stage 1, applicants should identify the regions in which they anticipate delivering apprenticeship provision during the funding period. The purpose of this information is to provide an indication of the overall geographical coverage that would be available through successful applications.

Where a provider predominantly delivers within one region but also delivers specialist provision in other regions, applicants should use their judgement to reflect the regions in which they expect to undertake meaningful delivery.

12. Shared Apprenticeships

12.1. In shared apprenticeship models, can the apprenticeship provider act as the lead organisation and employer of the apprentice?

Yes.

12.2. What responsibilities are providers expected to fulfil in relation to employment matters such as salary, holiday entitlement, sickness absence, disciplinary processes and other contractual employment arrangements?

Information on the shared apprenticeship model is included in Annex B of the Grant Application Pack paragraphs 3.1 and 5.1-5.9.

12.3. Is Shared Apprenticeships exclusively targeting micro and small businesses?

The Shared Apprenticeship programme is intended to support micro and small businesses with fewer than 50 employees and sectors that experience short term contracts, like the creative sector.

12.4. Can organisations that are already involved in the programme continue to deliver the support.

Yes, to ensure continuity and minimise disruption, transitional arrangements will be put in place for organisations that were receiving Shared Apprenticeship support prior to 1 August 2027.

12.5. Could Medr please clarify what the £4,000 payment for a shared apprenticeship covers?

The £4,000 Shared Apprenticeship payment contributes towards the additional costs incurred by the lead employing organisation in coordinating and administering the Shared Apprenticeship model. This includes:

- Recruiting and employing the apprentice.
- Managing employment responsibilities, including payroll, welfare and ongoing pastoral support.
- Paying the apprentice's wages and reclaiming wage costs from participating host employers, where applicable.
- Coordinating placements with host employers and ensuring they align with the apprentice's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), Apprenticeship Framework requirements and learning objectives.
- Matching apprentices to host employers based on their skills, development needs and employer requirements.
- Monitoring apprentice progress across multiple placements and maintaining communication with host employers.
- Recording placement information and updating the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) with details of host employers where apprentices are placed.

12.6. Is it mandatory for all providers to offer Shared Apprenticeships? If not, how should applicants respond to Stage 2, Question 12 for Strand 1?

Shared Apprenticeships are an important part of Strand 1, helping micro and small employers, particularly those with fewer than 50 employees, to access apprenticeship opportunities.

If you do not intend to offer Shared Apprenticeships, you should explain how your delivery model will support small and micro-businesses to recruit and retain apprentices, and how this support will be provided through your standard delivery arrangements.