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Careers education, skills, training and development for agricultural, horticultural and forestry workers: call for evidence

The call is from the Agricultural Advisory Panel for Wales Sub-Committee on Skills, Training and Development.

First published: 5 January 2024

Last updated: 5 January 2024

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Call for evidence and expertise on the delivery of careers education, skills, training and development for agricultural, horticultural and forestry workers in Wales

Opening: 10 January 2024

Closing: 2 April 2024

Background

The Agricultural Advisory Panel for Wales is an independent body that advises Welsh Ministers on the Agricultural Minimum Wage arrangements for agricultural, horticultural and forestry workers in Wales. It also promotes careers in agriculture, horticulture and forestry, the development of an appropriately skilled workforce and provides additional advice to ministers as required.

The Agricultural Advisory Panel for Wales established its permanent Sub-committee on Skills Development and Training in accordance with the Agricultural Advisory Panel for Wales (Establishment) Order 2016.

Membership includes union representatives, academics and experts from across the industry. There are also representative members from the Young Farmers' Club and Lantra, as stipulated in the order. Members bring with them a breadth of experience, knowledge and understanding of the skills and training needs for the agriculture sector, as well as the requirements for career progression opportunities.

Terms of Reference of the sub-committee

One of the areas which the Sub-Committee is to develop an integrated strategic vision for the delivery of careers education, information, advice and guidance in the agriculture, horticulture and forestry sectors in Wales. This work builds on

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and has considered previous reports including the **Independent Review of Learning Delivered by Further Education Colleges and the Relevance of that Delivery in Supporting Farm Businesses in Wales** carried out by Professor Wynne in 2015. In addition, we are mindful of work being carried out by other groups and organisations including but not limited to the previous and ongoing work of Regional Skills Partnerships and the 2023 report by the Steering Group for the Review of Vocational Qualifications in Wales.

In order to inform the work of the Sub-Committee, the Sub-Committee members are keen to invite evidence to be submitted from a wide range of stakeholders which will enable an evidence-based approach to the creation of the strategic vision for the agricultural, horticulture and forestry sectors in Wales.

The Sub-Committee have identified that there are five key stages at which skills, development and training need to be considered for agricultural, horticultural and forestry workers. These are:

- school
- colleges (including apprenticeships)
- universities
- lifelong learning (continuous professional development)
- transfer of career/new entrants

The needs and requirements of those engaged at each of the five stages identified above will differ and in answering the questions set below by this Call for Evidence we encourage responders to identify which of these five stages the response relates and provide evidence in relation to each of them. There is also a need to consider how people transition between stages and this is something we are also keen to receive evidence on.

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1. Key questions

- How can the profile of agriculture as a career be improved?
- What are the barriers and opportunities of entering the industry?
- How is diversity within the industry to be improved?
- What should a career progression plan within the agricultural, horticultural and forestry sectors look like? How is it to be measured?
- What skills and development opportunities are people looking for when choosing a career within or outside the agricultural, horticultural and forestry sectors?
- What is needed in terms of skills, development and training to ensure the agricultural, horticultural and forestry sectors in Wales is progressive, innovative and forward-looking?

2. Skills

- How valued are skills within the industry?
- What skills are required for workers within the agricultural, horticultural and forestry industries?
- What are the current skills levels within each industry and where are the gaps? If you have identified gaps, how do you think these could be filled?
- Should there be a minimum standard of skills set for all workers in these land-based sectors? If so, what characteristics would that minimum standard of skills have.
- What skills are required by an agricultural worker to deliver against the new *Sustainable Land Management framework*?
- What do you think is the best way to encourage the industry to understand the importance of *Continuous Professional Development*?
- It is suggested that it would be helpful for all workers in these land-based sectors to undertake a *Personal Development Plan* from time to time to

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identify the skills that they have but also the ones they need to develop. How do you think that Personal Development Plan should be conducted? Who is best placed to undertake such a Personal Development Plan?

- Are there skills which are developed within the industry that are of benefit for utilisation outside the industry and which contribute to the rural economy?

3. Training

- Please provide evidence on the content, quality, delivery and availability of training offered at each of the stages outlined above in Wales for agricultural workers.
- What are the barriers to undertaking training in these sectors in Wales?
- How do we attract and encourage employers to take on apprentices in these sectors?
- What are the methods of training and knowledge transfer that work the best within the sectors?
- Are there models for training which promote career progression in other sectors that we should be adopting?
- Is training sought from outside Wales for agricultural, horticultural and forestry workers? If so, what training and why?

4. Development

- Are there opportunities for agricultural workers to practice what they learn and to gain useful and relevant work experience and paid work placements?
- How is technology used to document and track development? Do you have suggestions of how technology could be used in this regard?
- What are the best ways to accredit and verify development? Does the Agrigop model of active learning work in agriculture? Would an Award

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model work in agriculture?

- How do we link the different stages identified above in the journey of an agricultural, horticultural or forestry worker throughout their career? Do you have suggestions as to how these links may be improved?
- What methods are utilised to personalise and professionalise development? Do you have suggestions of other methods that could be implemented?
- What guidance is available or do you think should be available to support a person's development within the industry in each of the stages highlighted above?
- How can collaboration and coordination between different stakeholders within the industry be facilitated to support a worker's development journey?

5. Data

- Please refer to any reports and reviews that have been undertaken in the last 15 years that you deem relevant to the work of the Sub-Committee in relation to skills, development and training.
- If you refer to any reports, have the recommendations of these reports been actioned and implemented? Please give examples.
- What data is or might be available in relation to agricultural, horticultural and forestry workers in Wales their skills, training being undertaken and career development? If so, where is this data available and how could that data be made available to the Sub-Committee?
- What data do you think would be useful in informing future work in this area?

Glossary

We thought it would be useful to provide our understanding of certain terms

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utilised within this document to assist you.

Continuous professional development

An ongoing process of frequently improving skills and competencies to enhance workplace performance and future career development.

Development

The broadening and deepening of knowledge in line with someone's development goals.

Sustainable Land Management Framework

The Framework (which includes the Sustainable Farming Scheme) is the mechanism by which Welsh Government will implement the Sustainable Land Management objectives to:

- produce food in a sustainable manner
- mitigate and adapt to climate change
- maintain and enhance the resilience of ecosystems and the benefits they provide
- conserve and enhance the countryside and cultural resources, promoting public access and engagement with them

Personal Development Plan

A **Personal Development Plan** (on Business Wales) is one which identifies the skills and qualifications that you have but also the short and long term goals that

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you have and the training that you require you to achieve those goals.

Responses

Please could any written comments or evidence on the above questions be sent **by 2 April 2024**.

Email: AAP@gov.wales

In writing: Agricultural Advisory Panel Manager

Welsh Government
County Hall
Spa Road East
Llandrindod Wells
LD1 5LG

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Any response you submit will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with matters relating to the Agricultural Advisory Panel. Responses will also be shared with the Sub-Committee and Agricultural Advisory Panel, and where the Welsh Government or the Panel undertakes further analysis of the call for evidence responses then this work may be carried out by third party contractors (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

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