



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION, DOCUMENT

Modification of The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW)

We want your views on the making of modifications to the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW).

First published: 16 April 2024

Last updated: 16 April 2024

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Contents

[Overview](#)

[Introduction](#)

[The modifications we are consulting on](#)

[Consultation Questions](#)

[UK General Data Protection Regulation \(UK GDPR\)](#)

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Overview

The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW) specifies the requirements that must be met for recognised Welsh apprenticeship frameworks to be issued under section 19(1) of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 (“the 2009 Act”).

We are consulting on the making of modifications to the SASW, to improve the quality of apprenticeships framework development and delivery to better meet apprentice and employer needs in Wales.

The modifications will enable SASW to be more flexible and responsive to the changing needs of industry and employers within a rapidly-changing skills environment.

Introduction

Apprenticeships are a key intervention in workforce development and in doing so, are a major constituent in driving economic growth. Apprenticeships support new entrants to the labour market and provide support for upskilling and reskilling of workers already in the workplace. They are a vital part of the Welsh Government’s Young Person’s Guarantee, which provides under 25s in Wales with the offer of support to gain a place in education or training, find a job or become self-employed.

The pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, the cessation of free movement on the labour market as well as digitalisation and climate change are having a major impact on our economy and employment. Apprenticeships have a central role in supporting recovery and promoting growth but also responding to challenges such as demographic change, digital innovation, sustainable or net zero

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

approaches.

In Wales an apprentice will follow an approved Welsh Apprenticeship Framework. These frameworks must meet the needs of the economy, industry or skills sector by ensuring an apprentice has the relevant knowledge, skills and qualifications that will enable and support their career choices. Frameworks are available in 23 sectors and within each, there are a range of pathways (options or routes available) based on specific occupations or job roles.

As noted in the Consultation Overview, The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (“SASW”) sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised Welsh apprenticeship framework. Compliance with the SASW is a statutory requirement of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

The Welsh Issuing Authority must have regard to this guidance in reaching a decision on whether a framework submission complies with SASW.

The modifications we are consulting on

Proxies

Where Essential Skills qualifications are specified in an apprenticeship framework, the apprenticeship framework currently states as a Welsh certificate requirement, the acceptance of a limited number of the recognised proxy qualifications.

Proposal: To allow additional proxy qualifications and new Digital Literacy proxy qualifications as a recognised alternative to Essential Skills (ES) as detailed under each apprenticeship framework level. The updated list can be found at Annex 1.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Why is this important

Proxy qualifications are equivalent or higher qualifications that assess the same knowledge and skills that are contained in Essential skills qualifications. By including a wider range of proxy qualifications learners will benefit from not duplicating prior learning whilst undertaking their apprenticeship.

Essential Skill adjustments for persons with Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

We recognise that there are barriers to participation that the standard essential skills qualification requirements may present to a person with a learning difficulty or impairments.

Proposal: Reasonable adjustments may be made to the minimum requirements relating to communication, application of number and digital literacy foundation apprenticeships (Level 2) and Apprenticeships (Level 3). The intended adjustments can be found at Annex 2.

Why is this important

This will enable a more inclusive offer for people with learning difficulties and learning disabilities helping to widen participation by opening up the Essential Skills entry requirements for apprentice levels 2 and 3.

Degree and Professional Apprenticeships

It is currently a requirement of SASW that Essential Skills are undertaken as part of a Welsh requirement learners undertaking Degree and Professional

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

apprenticeships (Level 6 and 7). There are established degree apprenticeship pathways offered in Advanced Manufacturing and Materials, Digital Technology and Engineering. This will be enhanced with a Railway Engineering pathway which was developed last year and additionally, universities are currently developing degree apprenticeship pathways in Construction Management, Civil Engineering, General Surveying and Quantity Surveying ready for the student apprentice intake in September 2024.

Proposal: Introducing a new section on degree and professional apprenticeships (levels 6 and 7), which will remove the essential skills requirements for apprenticeships at these levels.

Why is this important

Currently degree apprenticeships are included in the higher apprenticeships Levels 4 to 7 section of SASW. An apprentice commencing a degree would be expected to have an appropriate level of essential skills prior to learning. Therefore, a new section should be created in SASW for degree and professional apprenticeships (levels 6 and 7) to fully meet apprentice and industry needs.

It should be noted that currently universities are not delivering the essential skills elements of the frameworks, which has resulted in apprenticeship delivery not being SASW compliant and the apprentice is unable to obtain a certificate on completion.

Increase in the minimum qualification credits

The minimum qualification credits within a framework will be increased in the updated SASW, it is intended that apprentice frameworks must now contain a minimum of 38 credits, excluding Essential Skills credits (19 for Competency

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

and 19 for Knowledge).

Proposal: To enable apprentice frameworks to comply with the above, the minimum qualification credits within a framework must increase, for example, frameworks must now be a minimum of 38 credits but in most cases frameworks will significantly exceed 38 credits (excluding Essential Skills credits).

Why is this important

The minimum number of qualification credits has been increased to ensure an apprentice undergoes learning that provides the technical knowledge and understanding of the theoretical concepts relating to the skill, trade or occupation to underpin occupational competence

Consultation Questions

Question 1

What are your views on widening the list of proxies for Communications and Application of Number and including proxies for Digital Literacy?

Question 2

What are your views on the proposed adjustments to Essential Skills requirements for learners with Additional Learning Needs?

Question 3

What are your views on removing the requirement to undertake Essential Skills for learners undertaking Degree and Professional apprenticeships?

Question 4

What are your views on the change relating to increasing the minimum qualification credit from 37 credits to 38 credits (excluding Essential Skills credit values)?

UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation. Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (for example, a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data.

In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document.

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation.

If your details are published as part of the consultation response, then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

Your rights

Under the data protection legislation, you have the right:

- to be informed of the personal data held about you and to access it
- to require us to rectify inaccuracies in that data
- to (in certain circumstances) object to or restrict processing
- for (in certain circumstances) your data to be 'erased'
- to (in certain circumstances) data portability
- to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) who is our independent regulator for data protection.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the UK GDPR, please see contact details below:

Data Protection Officer:

Welsh Government

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Email: data.protectionofficer@gov.wales

The contact details for the Information Commissioner's Office are:

Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Tel: 0303 123 1113

Website: <https://ico.org.uk/>

This document may not be fully accessible.

For more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://www.gov.wales/modification-specification-apprenticeship-standards-wales-sasw-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).