



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Apprenticeship Issuing Authority for Wales

Guidance

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Apprenticeship Issuing Authority for Wales Guidance

Audience

The document is aimed at Framework Developers, Sector Skills Councils, apprenticeship key stakeholders, learning providers, employers, trade unions and awarding organisations

Overview

This guidance document sets out the role of the Issuing Authority in Wales and the process of publishing apprenticeship framework/pathways in Wales.

Action required

From 1st May 2020 the Welsh Government will approve and publish all Apprenticeship Frameworks in Wales

Further information

Enquiries about this document should be directed to:

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Welsh Government
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Bedwas
Caerphilly
Wales
CF83 8WT

Tel: 03000 253706

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[Twitter@com/apprenticewales](https://twitter.com/apprenticewales)



[Facebook.com/apprenticeshipscymru](https://facebook.com/apprenticeshipscymru)

Additional copies

This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at <https://gov.wales/apprenticeship-issuing-authority>

Related documents

Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW)

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This guidance document sets out the role of the Issuing Authority in Wales and the process of publishing apprenticeship frameworks/pathways in Wales.
- 1.2 Apprenticeships in Wales offers people aged over 16 paid employment combined with workplace training and off-the-job learning. It allows the Apprentice to gain technical knowledge and real practical experience, along with essential skills, required for their immediate job and future career.
- 1.3 As of the 1st May 2020 the Welsh Government became the Issuing Authority for Welsh apprenticeship framework/pathways. This role has previously been undertaken by Sector Skills Councils and sector bodies
- 1.4 This document supersedes all Welsh Apprenticeship Framework Issuing Authorities Guidance previously published.

2. Framework development overview

- 2.1 Apprenticeship frameworks/pathways can be used by employers as part of their workforce delivery to develop the skills of new and existing members of staff. They can be used regardless of whether financial support is available. Publically funded support for Apprenticeships is not automatic. Apprenticeships are prioritised towards certain groups, geographies and sectors in line with the Welsh Government's economic and skills priorities.
- 2.2A three year timetable will be published for framework review and development, including criteria for new frameworks which are transparent, consistent and fit for purpose.
- 2.3In addition, we will also publish the arrangements for an employers' 'Call to Action'. The 'Call to Action' will provide a gateway for employers to submit proposals to develop new and updated frameworks to help support their business' skills requirements. Further information will be available on the Welsh Government Apprenticeship webpages.
- 2.4The Welsh Government is developing new ways of working to help improve the quality of apprenticeship frameworks and related pathways in Wales by implementing new arrangements for their development to meet the needs of individuals, employers and the Welsh economy. This new process will strengthen the commissioning and developing of apprenticeship frameworks in Wales. It will ensure high quality frameworks/pathways are developed and published that benefits the Welsh economy and apprentices. This new process involves reviewing the structure of apprenticeship frameworks to make them more accessible and informative to all relevant stakeholders.
- 2.5A new four stage process has been introduced for the Development Partners to develop new frameworks/pathways or update them, this includes:
- Stage 1: Project Plan completed.

- Stage 2: Stakeholder Evidence Consultation with Steering Group. This consists of a steering group being established, stakeholder engagement, consultation on the most appropriate qualifications included to meet the requirements outlined in the pathway. This should include working with the National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW) and Colegau Cymru/Colleges Wales to ensure providers have the capability to deliver the framework/pathway once it has been published. A final stakeholder public consultation Evidence Report must be drafted once the engagement process has been completed.
- Stage 3: Revise the pathway. The Development Partners will revise the pathway to include the outcome of consultation at stage 2. A Supporting Evidence Report must also be completed.
- Stage 4: Final framework/pathway is submitted to the Welsh Government for approval and publication.

3. The role of the Issuing Authority

3.1 Once an apprenticeship framework has been developed by the Development Partner it will be submitted to the Welsh Government, under its role as Issuing Authority.

3.2 The Issuing Authority function is to certify that a new or revised framework meets industry standards and the minimum requirements set out in the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards Wales (SASW). The issuing function is a form of validation. It provides a final independent quality measure to test against compliance with SASW and the industry requirements are met. Further information on these quality measure are outlined at Section 5 of this document.

3.3 All apprenticeship frameworks/pathways must be approved and published by the Issuing Authority, regardless of whether they are funded by Welsh Government or funded through other means.

4. The role of the Wales Advisory Apprenticeship Board (WAAB)

4.1 The Wales Apprenticeship Advisory Board (WAAB) was established in April 2018 and is an independent enterprise-led Board, including Trade Union, Further Education and Higher Education representation. WAAB serves to provide the Wales Employment and Skills Board (WESB) and Welsh Government with advice and recommendations on matters relating to the content of apprenticeship frameworks and priorities in relation to their development in Wales.

4.2 The WAAB has a key role in advising and making recommendations to Welsh Government on priorities for commissioning apprenticeship frameworks to meet economic need and identifies sectors where new apprenticeships can make a real difference to both employers and apprentices. In carrying out its role, the WAAB will take into account the ongoing and future skills needs, the data and reports produced by the Regional Skills Partnerships in Employment and Skills Plans and Labour Market Research to ensure the right frameworks are commissioned to meet the needs of the economy.

4.3 WAAB has approved the indicative three year timetable for the apprenticeship framework review and development, as outlined in section 2.

4.4 Further information on the WAAB can be found <https://gov.wales/apprenticeships-skills-and-training>.

5. Quality Assurance Measures

5.1 The Issuing Authority has a key role in ensuring the quality of the frameworks are fit for purpose and meet industry standards.

5.2 When the Issuing Authority receives a framework/pathway, the following key areas will be considered and evidence will be required before the framework will be published and delivered by the apprenticeship providers. This will be the same approach whether it is a new framework, an updated framework or adding/changing a qualification to an apprenticeship framework. Also the same quality assurance process will be followed whether the framework is funded by the Welsh Government or by other means.

5.3 The quality measures considered include:

- The economic needs for the framework. There must be a sufficient economic need for the framework or pathway before it is developed. All framework must be endorsed by the Wales Apprenticeship Advisory Board (WAAB) where funded by the Welsh Government. WAAB will be informed of all apprenticeship frameworks that have been approved and are published, even if they are not funded by the Welsh Government.
- The consultation process has been completed and the outcome has been taken into account before submitting the final framework to Welsh Government. Evidence must be provided that the framework has been quality assured and endorsed by sector experts and key stakeholders.
- There is evidence that there is an apprenticeship provider who has the capability to deliver the framework/pathway in Wales.
- The framework/pathway is SASW compliant.
- A funding value is in place.
- The framework/pathway is bilingual.

6. Frameworks publishing process

Submission

6.1 The framework/pathway must be sent to Welsh Government electronically via email to DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@gov.wales. The Development Partner will receive confirmation that the framework/pathway has been received within 2 working days.

6.2 If a confirmation email has not been received after the 2nd working day of submitting, there may have been an issue with the initial email and the Development Partner should follow this up by contacting either Lisa Flay at Lisa.Flay@gov.wales or on 03000 259892 or the Apprenticeship Unit's mailbox DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@gov.wales.

6.3 The Welsh Government will undertake the quality checks, as outlined in Section 5 of this document, and will send the Development Partner a letter by email either approving the publication of the framework/pathway or rejecting the framework/pathway with the reasons for this decision.

Framework approval process

6.4 Once the Welsh Government has undertaken the validation checks and the framework/pathway has met the required quality, the framework/pathway will be published on the Welsh Government website <https://gov.wales/apprenticeships-skills-and-training> within 20 working days of approval.

6.5 The Development Partner will receive a letter confirming the publication of the framework/pathway within 20 working days of receiving the framework/pathway. A bilingual summary of the framework and the detailed framework/pathway will be published on the website and a link to the documents will be included in the letter.

Framework rejection process

6.6 Once the Welsh Government has undertaken the validation checks, as outlined in section 5 Quality Assurance Measures, and it has been determined that the framework/pathway does not meet the required quality checks, the framework/pathway will not be published.

6.7 A letter will be issued to the Development Partner within 20 working days of submission. The letter will include the outcome of the decision with detailed reasons why the framework/pathway did not meet the required quality.

6.8 The Development Partner can make the necessary changes and re-submit the framework/pathway to the Welsh Government via the Apprenticeship Unit mailbox DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@gov.wales.

7. Appeals process

7.1 If the Development Partner does not agree with the decision they can appeal it. The Development Partner must write to the Welsh Government within 10 working days setting out the reasons for the appeal and provide any further evidence.

7.2 The Welsh Government will further consider the framework/pathway. This may include consulting with stakeholders or sector experts to reach an informed decision. The Welsh Government will provide a decision within 20 working days of receiving the appeal.

8. Complaints

8.1 If the Development Partner considers they have been treated unfairly or have concerns regarding the decision they should write to the Apprenticeship Unit mailbox DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@gov.wales or alternatively you can send a letter to the following address:

Apprenticeship Unit
Welsh Government
Ty Afon
Bedwas Road
Bedwas
Caerphilly
Wales
CF83 8WT

8.2 A senior manager will investigate your complaint further. The Development Partner will receive a letter setting the outcome and next steps.

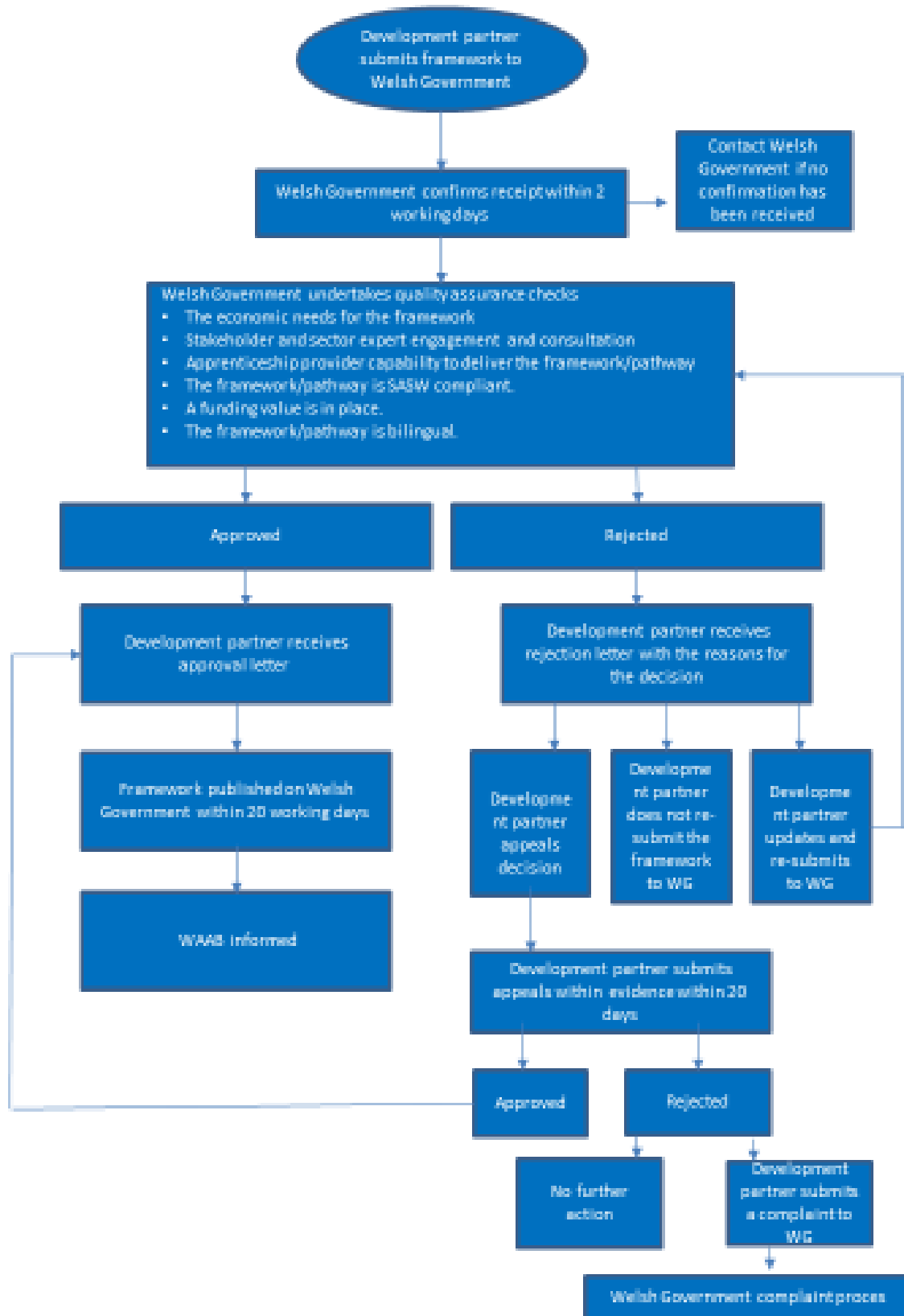
8.3 If the Development Partner feels the complaint has still not been resolved they can contact the Welsh Government Complaints Unit via email to complaints@gov.wales or alternatively you can send a letter to the following address:

Complaints Advice Team
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

8.4 Further information regarding Welsh Government complaints process can be found here - <https://gov.wales/how-make-complaint-about-welsh-government.html>.

Annex 1 – Issuing Authority Process

Apprenticeship Framework Issuing Authority Process Map



Annex 2 – Development Process

Apprenticeship Frameworks – Commissioning of REVIEW of Welsh Government Frameworks/ Pathways – 4 STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT – Process Overview

