



Consultation on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW)

Consultation

Consultation document No: 066/2009

Date of issue: 24 April 2009

Action required: Responses by 17 July 2009

Consultation on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW)

- Audience** Sector Skills Councils, Standard Setting Bodies, Employers, Trade Unions, Learning Providers and Awarding Bodies and other organisations wanting to comment.
- Overview** This consultation is to give information and seek views on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW). It sets out our proposals for standards which will help to deliver high quality Apprenticeship programmes, that equip individuals with the skills they need for successful careers and employers with the skilled workforce needed to help them compete and grow.
- Action required** Responses are invited on the issues raised in this consultation document. Issue date is 24 April 2009. Responses by 17 July 2009.
- Further information** Enquiries about this document should be directed to:
Jacqui Bastock
Business and Skills Division
Welsh Assembly Government
Llys-y-Ddraig
Penllergaer Business Park
Swansea SA4 9NX
Tel: 01792 224516
Fax: 01792 222498
E-mail: conappstand@wales.gsi.gov.uk
- Additional copies** Additional copies may be obtained from:
John Noakes
Business and Skills Division
Cathays Park 2, Cathays Park
Cardiff CF10 3NQ
Tel: 029 2080 1053
Fax: 029 2082 6838
E-mail: conappstand@wales.gsi.gov.uk
This document is also available on the internet at <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/education/?lang=en>
- Related documents** One Wales
Skills That Work for Wales
Consultation on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards in England (SASE)



ISBN 978 0 7504 5162 8

© Crown copyright April 2009

CMK-22-04-045(279)

E0010910

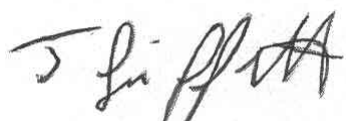
Ministerial Foreword

In *Skills That Work for Wales* the Assembly Government committed to expanding and strengthening the apprenticeship programme. The strategy set out plans for a review of the Apprenticeship Blueprint which sets the standards for the content of the frameworks of learning undertaken by apprentices in Wales.

This consultation on the *Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales* (SASW) sets out our proposals for standards which will help to deliver high quality Apprenticeship programmes, that equip individuals with the skills they need for successful careers and employers with the skilled workforce needed to help them compete and to grow. This is particularly important given the economic challenges we currently face. The only way to economic recovery is by government and employers working together to deliver the skills that will enable us to grow a strong competitive base.

The SASW will set out requirements for the development of Apprenticeship programmes which meet the needs of individuals and employers, and deliver comprehensive programmes of vocational and academic training of the highest quality. Legislation is currently before Parliament which, if approved, for the first time will put the Apprenticeship Programmes on a statutory basis and allow the Welsh Ministers to bring the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales into effect.

The UK Government is consulting separately on the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards in England and we will be working closely with Ministers in England as we take forward these developments. We also look forward to working with employers, learners, providers of education and training, SSCs and sector bodies in taking forward this work which is so vital for our future success.



John Griffiths AM
Deputy Minister for Skills

Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Organisational Background	3
Sector Skills Councils and Standard Setting Bodies	5
Rational and Issues for Consultation	6
Employee Rights and Responsibilities	9
Minimum Off-workstation Training	9
Minimum Entry Requirements	10

Annexes

Annexe A Draft Required Content for Specification of Apprenticeship Standards in Wales	13
Annexe B Consultation Questions and Answer Template	19

Introduction

1. This consultation document seeks views on the *Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales* (SASW). The SASW will set out the requirements with which each recognised Apprenticeship Framework in Wales must comply. The SASW will replace the existing non-statutory 'Blueprint' for Apprenticeships and is in response to the commitments set out in Skills that Work for Wales published in January 2008. The proposals are in line with the clauses on Apprenticeships set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill currently before Parliament. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill was introduced in the House of Commons on 4 February. The Bill includes provisions that, if approved, will place the Apprenticeships Programme on a statutory basis, and will allow Ministers in Wales to bring the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales into effect.

2. Annexe A presents proposals for the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales. After briefly setting out some relevant organisational background, this document highlights and explains the intended effect of the proposals contained in the Annex, discusses the rationale behind them and points to issues on which views would be particularly welcomed.

3. We look forward to receiving your views and comments. Please respond to this consultation by completing Annexe B.

Organisational Background

4. The Welsh Assembly Government provides funding for apprenticeship programmes in Wales and works with employers and Sector Skills Councils (SSCs), Standard Setting Bodies (SSBs), Trades Unions and training providers to support Apprenticeship training. As part of the overall drive to strengthen and support apprenticeship developments an Apprenticeship Unit is being established within the Welsh Assembly Government. The Unit will work with employers, learning providers and Careers Wales to promote and support the apprenticeship programme and help to ensure that the programme is meeting the skills needs of the economy and providing high quality training opportunities for young people and adults.

5. The Unit will work with employers to support them in providing high quality Apprenticeship places that bring a benefit both to the individual but also to the employer through a better skilled, more productive employee. The Unit will also work with Careers Wales in developing an on-line vacancy matching system to enable employers to advertise Apprenticeship opportunities, and for potential apprentices to apply for such vacancies.

6. The Welsh Assembly Government will keep the delivery of the Apprenticeship system under constant review to ensure that its delivery is as efficient and unbureaucratic as possible. It will support training providers to continue to enhance their offer, and to ensure quality provision. In addition, it will continue to work with the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils to ensure that standards are maintained so that Apprenticeship remains a high quality training route for individuals and employers.

Sector Skills Councils and Standard Setting Bodies

7. SSCs/SSBs have a key role to play in developing the provision for Apprenticeships and in supporting Apprenticeship growth. They have a particular role in relation to the content and standards of Apprenticeship frameworks. They will:

- Develop frameworks which comply with the SASW, and ensure that any frameworks drawn up by others within the sector do so also.
- Set and monitor standards for the sector which go beyond the minimum requirements of the SASW.
- Issue frameworks and maintain their currency.
- Ensure that there is coherence in the range of Apprenticeship Frameworks within their sector.
- Issue certificates to apprentices in Wales successfully completing their Apprenticeship training within their sector.

8. Following full implementation of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) in 2010 the Assembly Government will be prioritising the funding of QCF accredited qualifications within apprenticeship frameworks (with the exception of Key Skills, Essential Skills Wales and Wider Key Skills that will remain on the NQF). The SSCs/SSBs will be responsible for approving the qualifications that will form part of an Apprenticeship Framework. All vocational qualifications eligible for public funding will be approved by the SSCs before being entered on the QCF. This provides a bank of existing qualifications and units that SSCs/SSBs and employers, through their SSC/SSBs, can draw on to develop an Apprenticeship Framework.

9. Employers, through their SSC/SSBs, who wish to develop an Apprenticeship Framework will submit a short description of their plans, the qualifications and units they wish to use and how they meet the requirements set out in the SASW plus any further important elements that the SSC/SSB considers desirable for the sector. Employers will also be able to use their own qualifications or units, accredited onto the QCF, so that they can tailor their Apprenticeship appropriately. By 2010 the majority of qualifications (other than Key, Essential and Wider Key Skills) will be entered onto the QCF and approved under section 99 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 as eligible for public funding.

10. The 1993 Welsh Language Act requires public sector bodies to prepare and implement Welsh Language Schemes and to respond to the requirement that customer service is equally available in Welsh. This has led to an increase in the use of Welsh in the public sector, and also has implications for Sector Skills Councils, employers and education and training providers. Apprenticeship frameworks will therefore need to take into account the specific Welsh-language needs within each sector.

11. As discussed later, all Apprenticeship Frameworks must show clear progression routes into and from Apprenticeships. In shaping the qualification strategy for sectors, SSCs will be responsible for ensuring that there are appropriate progression routes for apprentices including ensuring UCAS tariffs are assigned to

level 3 and level 4 qualifications in Modern Apprenticeship, and Level 4 Apprenticeship frameworks. The SSC/SSBs have taken the lead in drawing up the content of Principal Learning within the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification and have a key role in the design and content of all vocational programmes and qualifications and so have a core responsibility to show route maps for learning.

12. The Alliance of Sector Skills Councils will be responsible for promoting continuous improvement and consistency across Apprenticeship Frameworks through a process of peer review and support.

Rationale and Issues for Consultation

Apprenticeship Frameworks

13. Proposals for the content of Apprenticeship frameworks are included at Annexe A. Apprenticeship frameworks will be achieved through a combination of requirements made in the SASW and through directions or guidance where the matter is not a condition which apprentices necessarily have to fulfil for the purposes of certification.

Qualifications concerned with the sector

14. Apprenticeships traditionally consist of both skills and knowledge, which, for the majority of existing Apprenticeship Frameworks, have had separate 'competence-based' and 'knowledge-based' qualifications. With the creation of the QCF, there will be increased opportunities for combining units from qualifications which were previously separate, and so the draft SASW expressly allows for the elements to be combined in a single qualification should SSCs and employers want this. The draft SASW defines the former competence-based element as being concerned with a distinct occupation or job-role and the knowledge-based element as technical theory relevant to the occupation and relevant knowledge of the industry and its market. These statements in practice denote what are currently known as NVQs and technical certificates, while not confining framework designers to these pre-established qualifications.

15. The draft SASW proposes that where the knowledge and competence elements are combined, they should be separately identified and separately assessed, though they do not need to be accredited as separate qualifications. We believe that it is important to retain this distinctiveness between the two components in order to allow individuals to gain credit towards an Apprenticeship through participation in other programmes e.g. principal learning within the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification or other appropriate vocational qualifications.

16. The provisions concerning assessment require independent assessment of the knowledge qualification or units so as to ensure objectivity and rigour.

17. An SSC/SSB may include more than one qualification of each type as alternatives within an apprenticeship framework. This will allow options for apprentices and providers – for example some knowledge-based qualifications lead more readily to higher-level opportunities while others are more occupationally

focused. Different apprentices may be suited to different qualifications, all of which fulfil the basic requirements of relevance to performance in, and relevant knowledge concerning, the occupation.

18. Where there is more than one qualification, the competence-based qualification should be nominated as the ‘principal qualification’*. We consider it important that the principal qualification is, or includes, the competence-based elements as these are the skills which are typically best practised and refined during the course of normal work activities with real pressures, customers and work equipment.

19. Where there are two qualifications, both should be accredited at Level 2 for Foundation Modern Apprenticeships and Level 3 for Modern Apprenticeships, though we would be interested in views on whether there is a case for relaxing this requirement in the case of knowledge-based qualifications, as sector knowledge requirements differ considerably.

20. The draft specifies that Modern Apprenticeships should require SSC/SSBs to include as knowledge-based qualifications those which are known to lead to opportunities within higher education, including foundation degrees. This does not mean that all the knowledge-based qualifications must lead to higher education, but that – where reasonable and relevant to the sector – those knowledge-based qualifications which do lead to higher education should be included in frameworks as an option. This progression route should also be clearly demonstrated by the allocation of UCAS tariffs to qualifications at Levels 3 and 4 within Modern Apprenticeships and Level 4 Apprenticeship frameworks.

21. We would also welcome views as to whether the SASW should be more specific in terms of volume and balance of learning. The credit-based structure of the QCF, provides an opportunity to ensure that an apprentice is provided with a particular balance and volume of learning. The precise content will be shaped according to the sector, the employer’s training programme and the individual’s aspirations. The core elements would be those needed to develop the sector competence and knowledge and optional units would allow flexibility to tailor the qualification and frameworks to an employer and individual’s needs.

22. The minimum threshold level for a full Level 2 is 13 credits and it might be reasonable to suppose that Level 3 credits would be up to about twice this amount. Due to the nature of an Apprenticeship which will demand both competence and knowledge-based elements, we would clearly expect the level of credits to be significantly higher than the minimum for Level 2 and Level 3. One option would be to leave this to the SSC/SSB or employer. This would have the advantage of enabling those closest to the needs of employers to develop Apprenticeship frameworks that are flexible and minimise bureaucracy in developing frameworks. The disadvantage is that this may result in different sectors, or even sub-sectors, having significantly and demonstrably different expectations for the amount of learning to be undertaken by apprentices.

* See Part 1 Clause 29 of the Bill

23. At the other end of the spectrum, we would welcome views on whether the SASW should set a higher minimum level and also set out the rules of combination between the key elements. This would have the advantage of ensuring consistency across frameworks and providing some degree of balance of learning as between knowledge and competence-based units. The disadvantage is that this may be seen as prescriptive and bureaucratic.

24. An example of setting standard levels would be to set out in the SASW an expectation that each framework would be expected to have a minimum of 37 credits. The units would be predominantly Level 2 for Foundation Modern Apprenticeships and Level 3 for Modern Apprenticeships although, in line with QCF principles, there would be flexibility to include units at a higher level and to build progression to higher learning; the rules for assigning levels to qualifications state that at least 50% of the credit gained must be from the level of the qualification or above.

25. On these lines the parameters might be that Apprenticeship frameworks should consist of a minimum of 37 credits, including at least:

- A minimum of 10 credits from competence based units based on the National Occupational Standards from the employment sector for which the framework is designed.
- A minimum of 10 credits from knowledge-based units providing underpinning theoretical knowledge required by an entrant to the relevant employment sector.
- Qualifications in Key Skills/Essential Skills Wales in Communication and Application of Number (either at Level 1, 2 or 3 dependent on the conclusion of the issues set out below).
- Wider Key Skills qualifications at the discretion of the SSC/SSB.
- Unit in Employment Rights and Responsibilities (see below also).
- Further units as necessary to make up the total and so as to enable personalisation for the individual and employer. Each framework would set out the number of additional units required to complete the Apprenticeship.

At least one accredited qualification, at Level 2 for Foundation Modern Apprenticeships and Level 3 for Modern Apprenticeships would need to be included in each framework. On this illustration the remainder could, in principle, be made up of units from different qualifications, so as to make up a minimum of 37 credits.

Questions

1. Is it reasonable to require the knowledge-based qualifications to be at least at Level 2 for Foundation Modern Apprenticeships and at Level 3 for Modern Apprenticeships?

2. Should the SASW:-

- (a) specify the minimum number of credits for an Apprenticeship framework?**
- (b) to what elements of the Apprenticeship framework should the minimum credit levels apply?**
- (c) what do you think the minimum credit levels should be?**

3. Should the inclusion of Wider Key Skills qualifications be mandatory or at the discretion of SSCs/SSBs?

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

26. The draft SASW makes it a requirement for apprentices to learn about their rights and responsibilities as a worker, particularly in the fields of equal opportunities and health and safety.

27. Existing Apprenticeship frameworks are not required to set out how this takes place and there is no mandatory assessment of this element of an Apprenticeship. There are arguments for and against introducing a formal, separate credit for ERR. Some may take the view that a requirement for formal assessment as part of a qualification could militate against teaching this element in the very early stages of an Apprenticeship – which most would agree was desirable in the area of health and safety – and that a formal qualification in such subject matter would not materially add to a person’s future prospects in the labour market or further education. Others would argue that it is a fundamental part of an Apprenticeship and should be easily identifiable and accredited.

28. The draft proposes that ERR is included in a qualification, though it does not specify the form of this qualification, which is left to the SSC/SSB. Frameworks would thus have to require the formal assessment, and passing, of the ERR material.

Question

4. Should the process of ERR assessment be left to each SSC/SSB?

Minimum Off-Workstation Training

29. The proposals set out in the draft SASW include a requirement for a reasonable absolute minimum for off-workstation learning time. We have considered whether we should simply ask SSC/SSBs to state a minimum ‘off work station learning time’ (which might differ in each case) or whether we should set out an absolute minimum for all frameworks. Some might consider that if there is a minimum number of credits (and therefore of typical guided learning hours) as illustrated in paragraphs 24-25 above, there would be no additional need to specify a national minimum for off work station time and that each SSC/SSB could prescribe their own minimum in the light of the particular qualifications they demanded and the traditions and typical facilities of the sector.

30. However it is our view that setting a national minimum would guarantee that all apprentices can benefit from dedicated time for acquiring knowledge, receiving instruction and reflecting on their performance, away from the pressures of work. We would welcome views as to what that minimum might be. It has been suggested that taking into account all the various elements of learning that need to be undertaken away from the immediate workstation a minimum of 250 hours should be set. Your views on this would be welcomed.

31. We suggest a definition of 'off-workstation training' as a period of "*instruction or supervised study, conducted at a separate physical location from that in which an apprentice normally works*". This could include periods of study which take place in an employer's premises and 'near the job' (for example in a company training room), or in a college or work based training centre, but it does **not** include periods of private, unsupervised study. We would expect this training to take place during normal working hours, and this will be made clear in the Apprenticeship Agreement.

32. The draft proposes that the minimum period of off-workstation training for Modern Apprenticeships is set at the same level as that for Level 2 Foundation Modern Apprenticeships. There might be a case for stipulating a higher minimum for Modern Apprenticeships, though of course SSC/SSBs are free to opt for a higher level if they wish under the proposals as they are set down here.

Questions

5. Do you agree that a minimum number of hours should be set for off-work station training? What should the minimum hours be and why? If you do not agree, then give your key reasons?

6. Do you agree with the proposed definition of off-workstation training?

7. Should the minimum off-station training time be set at a higher level for Modern Apprenticeships than for Foundation Modern Apprenticeships?

8. Should account be taken of off-workstation training time delivered through relevant qualifications attained prior to commencing an Apprenticeship framework?

Minimum Entry Requirements and Progression routes

33. We would expect all frameworks to give details of clear entry routes into Apprenticeships and progression routes on to further training including higher education. We propose that apprenticeship frameworks should set out the prior qualifications which are a necessary starting point for the learning expected in an apprenticeship, including demonstrating how other qualifications such as Principal Learning within the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) Framework, other vocational qualifications, GCSE and A Levels can lead to routes into an Apprenticeship. To promote progression within the system SSC/SSBs are expected, in the case of Modern Apprenticeships, to specify at least one Level 2 Foundation Modern Apprenticeship which qualifies a person for entry to the advanced level; there may, of course, be a few cases of Modern Apprenticeship where there is no relevant lower level Foundation Modern Apprenticeship.

34. SSC/SSBs would be expected to include the main occupations to which each framework led, together with avenues of career progression within the sector via further training and education, and higher education. In the case of Modern Apprenticeships and Level 4 Apprenticeships SSC/SSBs would be expected to seek a tariff rating from UCAS.

35. It is clearly desirable that there should be pathways between the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification and Apprenticeships, as young people in education move closer to the world of work. We would also wish to encourage the possibility of young people entering the Welsh Baccalaureate alongside or after their Apprenticeships, if this met their progression requirements (for example to undertake more intensive preparation for higher education). The design of additional and specialised learning associated with Principal Learning within the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification can clearly help, for example through providing a basis for the knowledge elements demanded in an Apprenticeship. We are less clear that any requirements should be made of Apprenticeship frameworks in linking with the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification, beyond specifying that available progression routes should be set out.

Questions

9. Is there a case for any Modern Apprenticeship or Level 4 Apprenticeship Framework to be exempt from the commitment to seek UCAS tariff rating?

10. What requirements could reasonably be made of Apprenticeship Frameworks to facilitate flexibility of progression between apprenticeships and the Welsh Baccalaureate?

Bureaucracy

36. The Welsh Assembly Government is committed to reducing bureaucracy in the development and delivery of Apprenticeships. We welcome your views on whether these proposals would achieve that aim whilst maintaining high standards of Apprenticeship frameworks. Are there other changes you would wish to see to achieve this objective?

11. Do the proposals meet the objective to reduce bureaucracy for the development and delivery of Apprenticeship frameworks?

Timing

37. The new Qualification and Credit Framework is intended to come into being in September 2010. As the SASW is drafted to take account of the credit system, we believe that compliance with the SASW should come into force in March 2011. This will allow time for SSCs, SSBs and other employers to review their existing frameworks in the context of the QCF and to implement the other changes proposed.

12. Is March 2011 a reasonable deadline for Apprenticeship frameworks to comply with SASW?

DRAFT SPECIFICATION OF APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS FOR WALES

1 This Annex sets out proposals for the content of an Apprenticeship framework. It is envisaged that this content will be promulgated under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Bill.

2. Where certain flexibilities are indicated the term “may” is used, though no attempt is made to indicate the whole range of flexibility permissible. SSC/SSBs in particular have the flexibility to increase requirements over and above those set out here either in terms of increasing the level or length of any element, or treating items indicated here as being a matter of guidance as mandatory in their frameworks, either for providers of Apprenticeship or as requirements for attainment by apprentices, or both.

Apprenticeship Frameworks: General

3. An Apprenticeship framework must specify whether it is a Level 2 Foundation Modern Apprenticeship framework, a Level 3 Modern Apprenticeship framework or a Level 4 Apprenticeship framework.

4. An Apprenticeship framework must set out the requirements, including standards of attainment, which an apprentice must satisfy to obtain an Apprenticeship certificate. The requirements must, as a minimum, include the following:

- The competence outcomes (and the relevant qualification(s) and/or unit(s)) which an apprentice must obtain.
- The knowledge/theory outcomes (and the relevant qualification(s) and/or unit(s)) which an apprentice must obtain.
- The Key/Essential Skills Wales qualifications which an apprentice must obtain.
- The Wider Key Skills which an apprentice must attain (where appropriate).
- The instruction which an apprentice must receive and the understanding the apprentice must demonstrate of employee rights and responsibilities.
- The number of Guided Learning Hours to be delivered annually*.
- The number of Guided Learning Hours to be delivered off-workstation*.
- The minimum entry conditions which will apply.

5. Further details of the requirements with which a framework must comply at Levels 2, 3 and 4 are set out below.

* Guided Learning Hours can also be read as Guided Contact Hours.

6. In addition, a framework must indicate the progression routes and significant opportunities open to an individual who has completed an Apprenticeship framework. Further details are set out below.

Level Two Foundation Modern Apprenticeships

Qualifications concerned with the sector

7. Frameworks must specify the qualification or qualifications which an apprentice must obtain. Any such qualifications specified in a framework must be accredited by the regulators viz: DCELLS, Ofqual and CCEA which represent:

- The competences required for performance in a distinct occupation or job-role.
- The relevant technical theory concerning the occupation or job-role, together with appropriate knowledge of the industry or market context.

8. Frameworks may specify two qualifications; one concerned with competence, and the other with theory/knowledge, or contain a single accredited qualification spanning both elements. If the latter course is taken, frameworks are required to specify a single qualification that contains distinct units of competence on the one hand and units concerned with theory/knowledge on the other.

9. The method of assessment of the competence qualification (or units) may be determined by the sector, subject to accreditation by the regulators. Assessment of the theory/knowledge qualifications (or units) is required to be conducted through independent methods.

10. Frameworks are required to designate the competence-based qualification as their 'principal qualification'. Where a framework contains a single qualification spanning both elements, described in paragraph 1, the Apprenticeship framework is required to designate this qualification as the 'principal qualification'.

11. SSC/SSBs may specify a number of alternative qualifications or units which satisfy the requirements for qualifications concerned with competence and/or qualifications concerned with theory/knowledge.

12. These qualifications are required to be accredited by the regulators at Level 2 of the QCF.

Key/Essential Skills Wales

13. Frameworks are required to demand that apprentices attain Key Skills/ Essential Skills Wales in Application of Number and Communication, at least at Level 1.

* carried out by assessors who do not have a vested interest in the outcome (Ofqual regulatory criteria, QCA 2004)

14. Frameworks should contain a requirement that apprentices who have already attained Key Skills/Essential Skills Wales at Level 1 (whether while an apprentice or beforehand) should undertake training at Key Skills/Essential Skills Wales Level 2 with an aim of completing that qualification. An individual would not be required to have completed a Level 2 qualification in order to gain an apprenticeship certificate, unless required to by a particular framework.

15. Frameworks should make a requirement that apprentices attain at least at Level 1 in the Key Skill/Essential Skills Wales of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) where this is deemed relevant to the effective performance in this employment sector.

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

16. Frameworks are required to contain instruction in the rights and responsibilities of employees in the occupation(s) to which the framework leads. This instruction is required to include an understanding of rights and responsibilities in the field of equal opportunities and in the field of health and safety, including the risks applying to those who are learning while at work and means of avoiding them.

17. Frameworks should require that apprentices understanding in ERR be assessed by means of a qualification. Frameworks may integrate assessment and certification of ERR within the theory/knowledge qualification, within a single primary qualification, or provide for certification through a self-standing unit.

Wider Key Skills

18. Frameworks should require the Wider Key Skills of Improving Own Learning and Performance, Problem Solving and Working with Others, where this is deemed relevant to the effective performance in this employment sector. SSC/SSBs should ensure that the level and amount of instruction and/or practice in the wider key skills is consistent with the demands of employers in the sector.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)*

19. Frameworks should specify the minimum number of GLH that an apprentice is to receive per year.

Off-workstation training

20. Frameworks are required to demand a minimum number of hours of instruction or supervised study, conducted at a separate physical location to that in which the apprentice's work normally takes place.

21. Frameworks may provide for particular qualifications to be conducted wholly or mainly through off-workstation study, but the obligation for off-workstation provision need not be satisfied only through study towards a qualification. Nor is the obligation for provision and attendance on off-workstation study satisfied through the prior attainment of a required qualification.

* Guided Learning Hours can also be read as Guided Contact Hours.

Duration of Apprenticeship Agreement and Framework

22. Frameworks may specify a minimum length of an apprenticeship agreement. Frameworks are required to allow this minimum to be satisfied by a series of agreements with different employers as well as by an agreement with a single employer.

Entry conditions

23. Frameworks are required to specify any minimum conditions for entry into the Foundation Modern Apprenticeship. Frameworks should state, as entry conditions:

- Those prior qualifications which SSC/SSBs consider form a necessary basis for achievement in any element of the framework.
- Any age which an apprentice should have attained and which is required by law for work in significant parts of the employment sector to which the framework relates.

24. Frameworks are required to ensure entry conditions comply with equal opportunities legislation.

Progression routes

25. Frameworks must indicate progression routes into and significant opportunities likely to be open to a person who has completed a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship, including in particular:

- The relationship between Principal Learning within the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification and apprenticeships and opportunities for progression from apprenticeships to the Welsh Baccalaureate.
- The occupations or job-roles which that person would reasonably expect to be regarded as qualified to undertake.
- Modern Apprenticeship frameworks within the sector which the completion of a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship qualifies a person to enter.
- Avenues of career progression which are recognised within the sector and which are available either through training with sector employers or through further or higher education.

Level Three/Four Modern Apprenticeships

Qualifications concerned with the sector

26. Requirements are as for a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship, with the exception that the qualifications are required to be accredited by the regulators at least at Level 3.

27. SSC/SSBs should include as theory/knowledge qualifications, or units, any qualifications which are known to give access to higher education programmes relevant to their sector.

Key/Essential Skills Wales

28. Frameworks are required to demand that apprentices attain Key/Essential Skills in Application of Number and Communication, at least at Level 2.

29. Frameworks should make a requirement that apprentices attain at least at Level 1 in the Key/Essential Skills Wales of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) where this is deemed relevant to the effective performance in this employment sector.

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

30. Requirements are as for a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship.

Wider Key/Essential Skills

31. Requirements are as for a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship.

Off-workstation training

32. Requirements are as for a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship.

Duration of Apprenticeship Agreement and Framework

33. Requirements as for a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship.

Entry conditions

34. Requirements and guidance are as for a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship.

35. SSC/SSBs should specify that certain Foundation Modern Apprenticeships at Level 2, when completed, are sufficient to allow entry to the Modern Apprenticeship framework.

Progression routes

36. Frameworks must indicate significant opportunities likely to be open to a person who has completed a Modern Apprenticeship, including in particular:

- The occupations or job-roles which that person would reasonably expect to be regarded as qualified to undertake.
- Avenues of career progression which are recognised within the sector and which are available either through training with sector employers or through further or higher education.

37. SSC/SSBs should seek a UCAS tariff for Modern Apprenticeship frameworks, and if UCAS awards points a framework must state how many points it has attracted.

ANNEX B

CONSULTATION ON THE SPECIFICATION OF APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS FOR WALES (SASW)

Thank you for your time and co-operation in responding to this consultation. It would be helpful if you could use this questionnaire.

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
POSTCODE: _____
TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____

Responses to the consultation may be made public. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the author are published along with the response unless you indicate otherwise. Would you prefer that your response is kept confidential?

Yes No

Are you responding as an individual or representing an organisation or group?

Individual Organisation

Please tick one of the following boxes that best describes your organisation:

Sector Skills Council

Standard Setting Body

Employer

Trade Unions

Learning Provider

Awarding Body

Other Please specify: _____

Please comment as fully as possible. An electronic version of this proforma can be obtained from <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/education/?lang=en>. Responses should be returned to Jacqui Bastock, Business and Skills Division, Welsh Assembly Government, Llys-y-Ddraig, Penllergaer Business Park, Swansea SA4 9NX or to conappstand@wales.gsi.gov.uk by 17th July 2009.

Overview

Qualifications concerned with the sector

Q1. Is it reasonable to require the knowledge-based qualifications to be at least at Level 2 for Foundation Modern Apprenticeships and at Level 3 for Modern Apprenticeships?

Yes No

Comments

Q2. Should the SASW:-

(a) specify a minimum number of credits for an Apprenticeship Framework?

Yes No

Comments

(b) To what elements of the Apprenticeship framework should the minimum credit levels apply?

Knowledge Element Yes No

Competence Element Yes No

Key/Essential Skills Wales Yes No

Wider Key Skills Wales Yes No

ERR Yes No

Other (Please Specify)

Comments

(c) What do you think the minimum credit levels should be?

Knowledge Element

Competence Element

ERR

Other (Please specify)

Key/Essential Skills Wales and Wider Key Skills will only be available as whole qualifications

Comments

Q3. Should the inclusion of Wider Key Skills qualifications be mandatory or at the discretion of SSCs/SSBs?

Yes

No

Comments

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

Q4. Should the process of ERR assessment be left to each SSC/SSB?

Yes No

Comments

Minimum Off-workstation training

Q5. Do you agree that a minimum number of hours should be set for off work station training? What should the minimum hours be and why? If you do not agree, then give your key reasons?

Yes No

Comments

Q6. Do you agree with the proposed definition of off-workstation training?

Yes No

Comments

Q7. Should the minimum off-station training time be set at a higher level for Modern Apprenticeships than for Foundation Modern Apprenticeships?

Yes No

Comments

Q8. Should account be taken of off-workstation training time delivered through relevant qualifications attained prior to commencing an Apprenticeship framework?

Yes No

Comments

Minimum Entry Requirements and progression routes

Q9. Is there a case for any Modern Apprenticeship or Level 4 Apprenticeship Framework to be exempt from the commitment to seek UCAS tariff rating?

Yes No

Comments

Q10. What requirements could reasonably be made of Apprenticeship Frameworks to facilitate flexibility of progression between apprenticeships and the Welsh Bacallaureate?

Comments

Bureaucracy

Q11. Do the proposals meet the objective to reduce bureaucracy for the development and delivery of Apprenticeship frameworks?

Yes No

Comments

Timing

Q12. Is March 2011 a reasonable deadline for Apprenticeship frameworks to comply with SASW?

Yes No

Comments