

Medr

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

Post-16 Funding Adult Community Learning

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Adult Community Learning

- Core local authority Community Learning Grant supports the delivery of adult community learning (ACL) provision across 21 local authorities and 1 further education institution (Bridgend College through Bridgend LA).
- The grant covers for community-based learning for learners aged 19* and over, with a focus on basic skills, including literacy, numeracy and digital skills.
- For what follows / is academic year (AY) – is financial year (FY)

Community Learning Grant (CLG)

- The investment methodology for CLG was reviewed in AY 2023/24.
- The budget was divided equally between the local authorities based on their share of the population of Wales, based on the census, that did not have a level 1 qualification.
- In each subsequent year since, the budget has been maintained at the same level.
- Confirmation of expenditure is through CoE, but will move onto LLWR in AY 2026/27

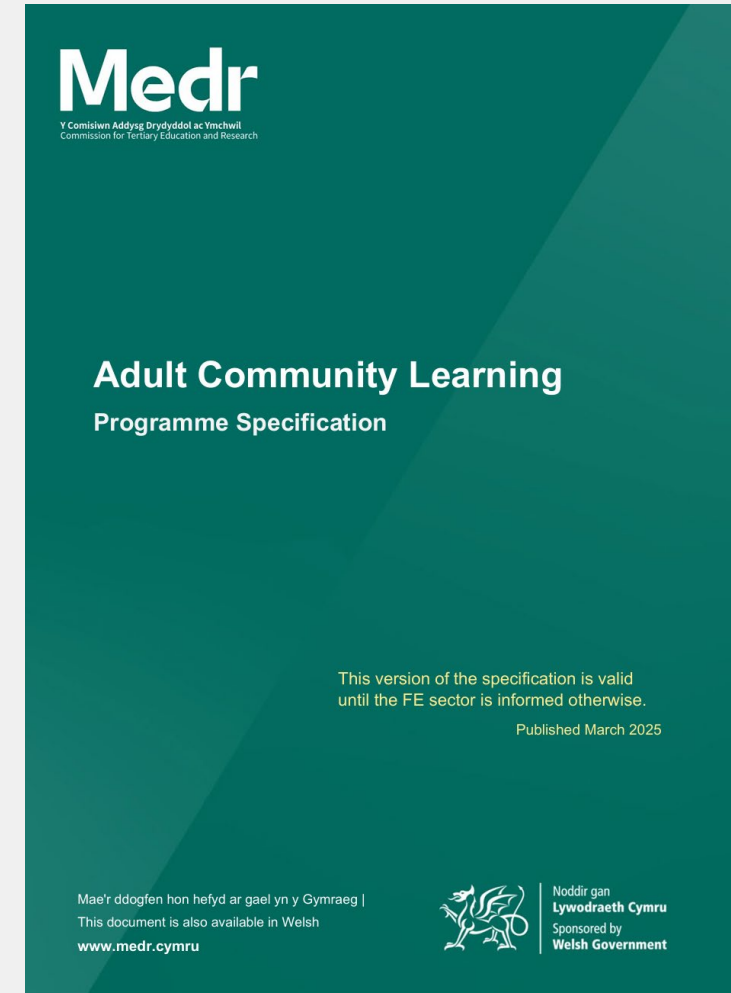
Community Learning Grant (CLG)

- In AY 25/26 Local Authority investment moved to an academic year – the allocation was 16 months.
- In AY 26/27 the allocation will be back to a 12-month allocation, maintaining the same level of previous investment.
- The CLG investment applies the unit rate which has increased by 5.4% for 2026/27.
- Local authorities are required to meet 97% of their CLG financial target. Any delivery below this level will be reclaimed in full.
- CLG payments will be paid to providers in three instalments in the AY 2026/27 academic year: 33.33% in August 2026, 33.33% in December 2026, and 33.34% in April 2027.

Specification

- Medr provides funding for Adult Community Learning in the effort to give individuals accessible opportunities to develop new skills, gain knowledge, and enhance personal, social, and professional growth.
- Arrangements must be in place for meeting the essential skills needs of any learner requiring learning at Level 2 or below
- Learner progression and destination is a key performance measure for the programme and crucial in evaluating programme delivery.
- Details on SSA and LLWR fields are outlined in the Annexes.

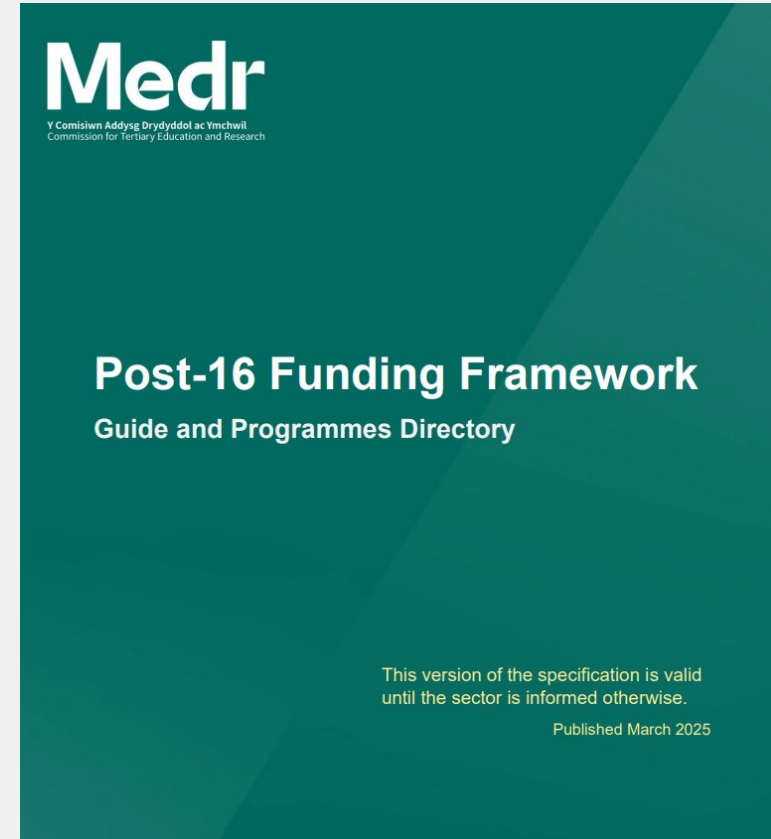
[Adult Community Learning: Programme Specification](#)



Post 16 - Funding Framework

- This is the bible for Further Education Institutions and Local Authorities that receive funding from Medr.
- For Adult Community Learning provision, where shortcomings are identified through Estyn inspection, the Adult Community Learning partnership must develop and implement a detailed action plan with clear objectives, measurable targets, and defined responsibilities to address those shortcomings.
- Adult Community Learning providers may retain up to 3% of the funding provided under the Community Learning Grant for expenditure on central and administrative services. (come back to this later!)

[Post-16 Funding Framework Guide and Programmes Directory](#)



Post 16 - Funding Framework

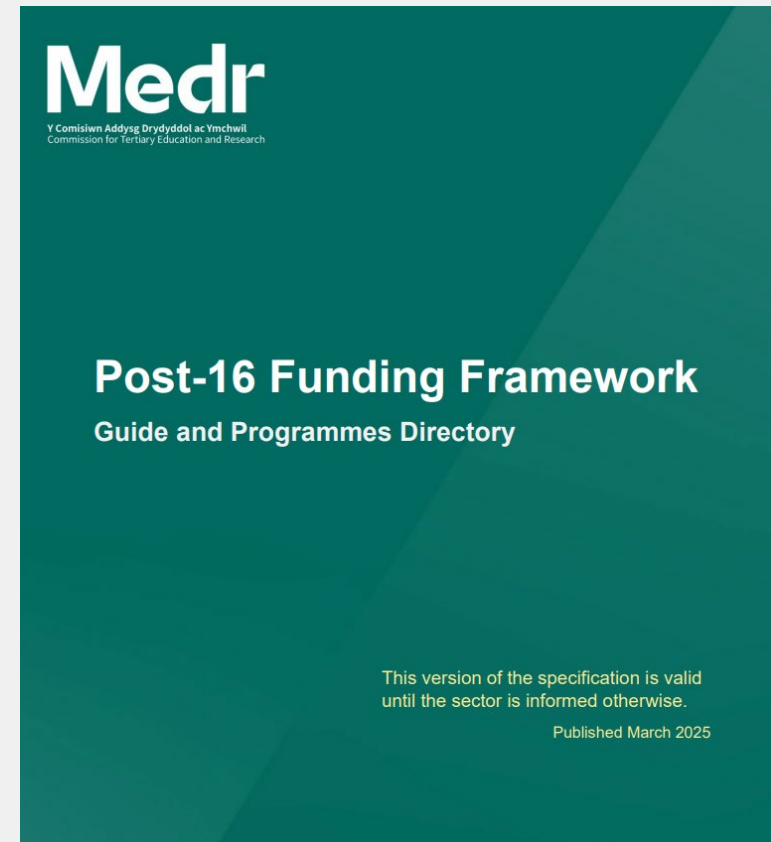
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- Adult Community Learning providers may use up to 5% of the Community Learning Grant allocation as engagement activities.
- As an ongoing requirement, providers must:
 - (b) for further education institutions and adult community learning providers, submit timely and accurate data via the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) in accordance with LLWR guidance
- Further education institutions and adult community learning providers must adhere to the *LLWR Data Management Principles*, available on [LLWR-Inform](#)

Notification event:

- Any actual or proposed material change to the provider's organisational or delivery arrangements, including changes to sixth-form structures or Adult Community Learning partnership arrangements.

[Post-16 Funding Framework Guide and Programmes Directory](#)



Learner Eligibility

- Learners accessing provision through Adult Community Learning (ACL) partnerships are eligible from age 19*.
- Individuals are deemed ineligible if they are currently:
 - i. attending any further education or higher education provision; or
 - ii. in Medr- funded apprenticeships; or
 - iii. an ineligible overseas national.
- Most people aged 16+ who are legally residing in Wales are eligible for post-16 funding, with the exceptions detailed in paragraphs 33-37.
- Additional guidance for institutions and funding auditors on acceptable evidence of learner eligibility is provided in paragraphs 38–46

Sector response: Why are some 16-19 year olds in ACL?

FE can feel intimidating and inflexible	Learners can want small, calm, trusted environments	Lack confidence or readiness after previous disrupted education
Mental health needs, anxiety and neurodivergence	Can face qualification barriers	Disengage mid-year or miss enrolment points in FE
Home-educated, looked-after, UASC, or care leavers	They would like ESOL, Essential Skills or short employability courses that are not offered in FEIs	Resit GCSE English and Maths routes are unavailable

Best practice across the ACL sector

GCSE resits	FEIs receive part time mainstream funding to deliver GCSE resits and Essential Skills, depending on the learner's level
Home educated learners	Should be signposted to FEIs in the first instance and offered advice and guidance on suitable courses. Learners have access to Additional Learner Support (ALS) funding to meet their personal needs
Not meeting college entry requirements	FEIs receive full time mainstream funding and offer courses from pre-entry level. Learners should be encouraged to consider all available options.
ESOL	Delivery varies across partnerships, including Reach Hubs and FEIs
Evening learners	Learners should be checked on LLWR to avoid duplication of funding
Curriculum and area offering	In line with ACL specification guidance and informed by P&C planning analysis

Next Steps

- Exceptional circumstances option is available on a case by case basis
- Communicating these considerations to FEIs to encourage collaboration throughout the academic year
- Ongoing engagement with the ACL partnerships, including exceptional circumstances discussions and planning meetings
- Working with Performance and Co-ordination team to map curriculum and identify regional gaps
- Further Medr considerations

Engagement activities

- Adult Community Learning Providers can use up to 5% of their CLG allocation for learner engagement activities.
- The main purpose of the funding is to enable providers to reach out to those individuals not currently in education and to create opportunities for people across Wales to participate in courses that will raise aspirations and encourage reflection on the benefits of career paths, alongside motivating those participating to continue their educational journey.
- The funding is primarily intended to support providers to engage and reengage individuals who are currently not participating in education, particularly those who are hardest to reach or have the greatest barriers to learning.
- Medr will use the data submitted via the LLWR to monitor compliance with the programme specification.

[Engagement Activities - Programme specification](#)

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Engagement activities

- Engagement funding should be utilised to:
 - i. engage prospective learners in short courses, including elements of literacy, numeracy and/or digital skills
 - ii. promote continuous learning opportunities
 - iii. encourage participation and continuous improvement for those learners participating in courses, with clear evidence of progression
 - iv. create an opportunity to move individuals towards a level 2 qualification or back into education

[Engagement Activities - Programme specification](#)

Unit rate

- Across Further Education Institutions and Local Authorities, there is a common unit rate. The unit rate is an hourly rate.
- **Subject Sector Area (SSA) Weightings are applied** depending on the level and the Subject Sector area (and therefore the cost of delivering a particular programme)
 - e.g. A construction programme attracts an uplift of 1.95 while an AS level programme attracts an uplift of 1.2
- To get the hourly rate, we multiply the unit rate with the above weighting.
- When the unit rate increases, this course hourly rate increases.

3% Centrally retained

- Further Education Institutions and School Sixth forms (via LAs) have a 3% centrally retained amount – in a similar way to the CLG.
- FEIs receive ~85% of their funding from us and their 3% doesn't cover all their staffing costs to run the organisation.
- They use some of the costs generated for learners from programme values to pay for staff.
- ACL providers can do this, too. It is not expected that all ACL staffing costs are met from the 3% centrally retained.

General elements

- While we are waiting for section 94, the funding has remained at the same level. Unit rate is increasing the programme value – less learners needed for the same funding.
- Recognition of pay parity and National insurance – what we share with the sector is what Welsh Government are willing to fund.
- Many funding methodologies have remained the same – Uplifts are down for review in the coming year – tertiary consideration. ALN is also being considered of how it applies across the sector.