

# Structure for Welsh Apprenticeship Frameworks

## Consultation Response Form

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Responses should be returned by 9 December to

Apprenticeship Unit  
Further Education and Apprenticeships Division  
Welsh Government  
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or completed electronically and sent to:

e-mail: [DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@gov.wales](mailto:DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@gov.wales).



Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is the largest public sector organisation in Wales. Its purpose is to ensure that the natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, enhanced, and used, now and in the future. This means looking after air, land, water, wildlife, plants and soil to improve Wales' well-being, and provide a better future for everyone.

The [Environment \(Wales\) Act](#) and the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act](#) together provide modern legislation for managing Wales' natural resources and improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales (it's sustainable development). In light of the recent climate change and environment emergency declaration by Welsh Government and other public bodies, an understanding and appreciation of the need for the [sustainable management of our natural resources](#) (SMNR) is essential now and in the future, as our environment comes under increasing pressure from a growing population. This will directly impact and be impacted by climate change and will drive the need for increased energy production adding pressure to our use of natural resources, their resilience and biodiversity. In line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act this will require work across the environment and education sectors to ensure an understanding and positive connection with the role that natural resources and the environment play in our lives socially, economically and culturally, is established from a young age and built on throughout education including through apprenticeship pathways and into employment.

Natural Resources Wales is looking forward to working with Lantra on the current review of the apprenticeship frameworks for the land-based sector would be happy to continue to work with the Apprenticeship Unit to ensure the required level of environmental awareness is visible within the new Apprenticeship Framework as a whole. NRW can provide access to subject specialists, support networks, resources, data and training for teachers and education professionals.

For further clarification or information please contact:  
[education@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk](mailto:education@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk)  
[www.naturalresources.wales/learning](http://www.naturalresources.wales/learning)

**Question 1** - Do you agree with the principle of apprenticeship sectors and pathways being linked to occupations?

|              |                                     |                 |                          |                                   |                          |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Agree</b> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>Disagree</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Neither agree nor disagree</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|

**Supporting comments**

NRW agrees with the principle of apprenticeship sectors and pathways being linked to occupations but notes that as acknowledged in the consultation document, occupations of the future are not yet clear. Therefore, any new Framework needs built in flexibility to adapt to future demands and new ways of working.

**Question 2** - What impact might occur in removing existing generic frameworks (e.g. business administration and management)?

Whilst noting that the demand for apprenticeships is changing and employers are seeking skills at higher levels, there needs to a consideration of the major changes on the horizon before any wholesale removal of existing generic frameworks. Any new framework will need to include flexibility and adaptability to cope with future demands and new ways of working.

Wales is also undergoing the largest change to curriculum in many years which will affect the way young people learn and inevitably the way in which they choose a career path. Any new Framework will need to reflect the four purposes of the new Curriculum for Wales and consider how the six areas of Learning and Experience and *What Matters* statements will feed into future apprenticeship pathways.

There is also a need to reflect the new ways of working proposed in the Environment Act (the sustainable management of natural resources) and the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and consider skills required to deal with the Climate and Nature emergency, the consequences of leaving the European Union and Wales' developing Health and Well-being agenda.

In summary we feel it is too early to drop existing frameworks unless there is clear evidence of duplication. Rewording and reconfiguration may be just as useful and provide some flexibility to encompass future changes.

**Question 3** - Are there any broad occupational sectors you would expect to see that are not included?

There is no reference to the sea/marine/coastal environment – see answer to Q4

**Question 4** - Should any of the proposed occupational sectors be renamed, realigned, merged or split?

There are key parts of legislation and new ways of working currently being developed and embedded which are not reflected in Annex 1 – Proposed Occupational Sectors and pathways e.g. SMNR (the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources) as laid out in the [Environment Act 2016](#).

The Sustainable Management of Natural Resources is a way of working which should underpin Occupational Sector 4 and support Occupational Sector 7

We suggest to amending the description of Occupational Sector 4 from  
Agriculture & Environment  
to

**Sustainable Management of Natural Resources**  
of which Agriculture is a pathway

This will reflect the broad sector of the natural environment sector including land **and sea** (which is missing totally) and include species (flora and fauna) management, designated protected habitats, sustainable and renewable energy (from Sector 10).

In any management scenario it is important to understand what has gone before in order to propose what should happen in the future, therefore there may also be elements of the Cultural Heritage pathway from Occupational Sector 1 which would be useful to include in Sector 4.

An understanding of the SMNR principals and how to implement them are adaptable skills key to reaching the levels of expertise respected by others and would provide employers with assurance that individuals are occupationally competent when they complete their apprenticeship.

**Question 5** - Are the occupational pathways appropriate and aligned correctly within sectors?

See answer to Q4 – we suggest that Sustainable and Renewable Energy in Sector 10 should be moved to Sector 4 and elements of Cultural Heritage in Sector 1 will also be relevant.

Additional pathways could include:

- Sustainable Forestry (currently Trees and Timber),
- Sustainable Land Management (including current Environmental Conservation)
- Sustainable Marine and Coastal Management
- Natural Environment Engagement (working with volunteers, communities, schools and businesses to promote WFG, ways of working, multiple health and well-being benefits – links to Playwork)

**Question 6** - We would like to know your views on the effects that changes to the structure of apprenticeship frameworks in Wales would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- i) opportunities for people to use Welsh
- ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

### **Supporting comments**

Any changes within the Education system should apply the Welsh Language Standards with teaching and learning available through the medium of Welsh.

**Question 7** - Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- i) positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language
- ii) no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

## Supporting comments

As above

**Question 8:** We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Our decline in biodiversity and climate change crisis requires many environment sector roles to have skills to influence and collaborate effectively with the public and stakeholders in order to sustainably manage our natural resources.

There is a distinct reduction in society's connection to nature and Apprenticeships are one mechanism for fostering this connection with individuals, communities and wider stakeholders.

See: [NRW's Natural Progression steps model](#) and research based on the [Multiple benefits of outdoor learning](#)

Taking part in an environmental apprenticeship enables individuals to promote the sustainable management, benefits and value of natural resources and ecosystems.

As an organisation, we are committed to helping develop a skilled workforce for Wales. We believe that placements make a significant contribution to the success of our business whilst also giving people the opportunity to gain valuable skills and share experience and expertise.

NRW recognises placements are a key mechanism to deliver many Welsh Government and NRW strategic aims, including our SMNR principles and wellbeing objectives.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: