

Medr reform: What you need to know

25 June 2025  Daljit Sambhi and Trish D'Souza

As of August 2024, **Medr** became the new post-16 regulator in Wales, and governs the funding and regulation of tertiary education providers in Wales. Therefore, we can expect to see changes impacting on further education, higher education, apprenticeships, training and adult learning.

One of Medr's key aims is to make changes to the registration requirements for tertiary education providers in Wales from 2026. As such, it is currently consulting on proposals for new regulations to support the establishment of the register. This will have a further impact on the available funding for providers' course provision.

What may be new?

Part 2 of The Tertiary Education and Research Wales Act 2022 introduces a new system of registration for higher education (HE) providers together with complementary regulations which set out the initial and ongoing conditions of registration.

The proposed associated regulatory arrangements will provide the statutory framework within which Medr will oversee the activities of a full range of higher education providers in Wales such as universities, further education colleges and other providers of HE courses.

This framework will relate to:

- Higher education (including franchised/sub-contractual).
- Higher education courses specified by Welsh Ministers in regulation.
- Further education (including A-levels and other vocational provision).
- Apprenticeships.
- Adult community learning.

Two types of HE providers

Medr is consulting on two categories of registration which will apply to HE Providers: Higher Education (core) or Higher Education (alternative) categories. Regulation 4 of the regulations confirms that providers may only be registered in one category on Medr's register at any one time.

Those HE providers registered under the core category, will be eligible for their courses to be automatically designated for Welsh government student fee support and maintenance support at a higher rate for tuition fee loans for undergraduate courses and be subject to a fee limit for qualifying courses. In addition, they will also be eligible for higher education grant funding.

Those courses provided by those registered as HE providers (alternative) will also be eligible for automatic designation for Welsh government student fee support and maintenance support but only at lower tuition fee loan level and would not be subject to any fee limits. Providers registered in this category will not be eligible for grant funding.

Monitoring of conditions

Alongside the introduction of these new HE categories for registration, Medr is also responsible for monitoring compliance with registration and funding conditions and is authorised to intervene in the event of breaches. The conditions for registration will be split in

two subdivisions – initial and ongoing.

The initial conditions for registration include validation arrangements, information provided to prospective students, financial sustainability, governance and management, quality, welfare of staff and students. Notably HE providers registered to the core category will also have to satisfy additional conditions, those being charitable status and fee limits requirements.

The ongoing conditions are the same as the initial conditions but also include having regard to advice and guidance, learner protection plan, learner engagement code, equality of opportunity, complaints process, Welsh language, notification of changes which affect the accuracy of information, information, assistance and access.

Publications from Medr state that some elements of the Regulatory Framework will also apply to other tertiary education and training providers in Wales via conditions of funding, where higher education is delivered through franchise or sub-contractual partners.

Part of Medr's remit is to monitor the financial sustainability of all tertiary education providers in Wales. Therefore, it seeks the views of such partners on the conditions of funding and has tasked higher education bodies with raising awareness of this consultation.

Reducing the burden

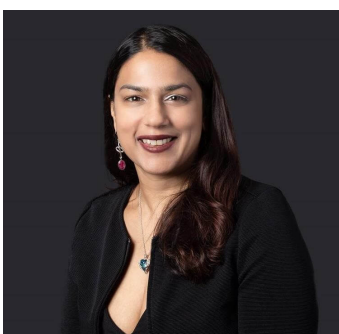
Tertiary education providers within the sector such as further education colleges, who offer many courses include A-levels, B-tecs and vocational courses, may be concerned as to whether they need to comply with the conditions based on the type of provider they are or comply with the conditions in relation to the type of provision offered to the students. However, Medr has indicated that the new registration system is intended to be less burdensome overall.

Timescales

The register will be finalised by Medr on 31 July 2026, with the associated regulatory regime fully implemented for the academic year 2027 to 2028. Medr is seeking views on elements of the new regulatory system in Wales via a [consultation for tertiary education providers](#) which closes on 4 July 2025.

Should you require any further support with the topics discussed, [please get in touch](#).

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