

New authority to oversee skills and the higher and further education sectors in Wales

The move comes after the Welsh Government accepted the [recommendations of an independent review carried out by Professor Ellen Hazelkorn](#), with a full consultation to follow in the spring.

Published in March 2016, it suggested:

- Establishing a single regulatory, oversight and co-ordinating authority for the post-compulsory education sector.
- The new body will be responsible for funding provision at all levels, ensuring quality and be the lead funder of research.
- Placing the needs of learners at the heart of the education system by establishing clear and flexible learning and career pathways.
- There should be equal value and support for vocational and academic pathways and connections between qualifications and the labour market need to be improved.

Kirsty Williams said:

“The boundaries between higher education and further education are now breaking down.

“Working lives are now longer, and change rapidly, and we need a system that makes it easier for people to learn and obtain the skills they need throughout their careers. This is happening against a backdrop of rapid change in other parts of the UK and Brexit.

“The various sectors and providers in Wales are regulated and funded in different ways by different bodies, resulting in competition, gaps and confusion for learners.

“Professor Hazelkorn concluded that the current system does not focus sufficiently on learners and does not fully achieve value for money. Her report emphasised the need for post-compulsory education and training to operate as a single sector.

“I have given these proposals careful consideration and the model she puts forward builds on what is tried and tested in successful education systems, and I want Wales to enjoy those same advantages.

“This is an opportunity to shape a system where institutions of all types are encouraged to work together to meet learners’ needs, allowing them to progress and building strong links with business and providing the skills our economy needs.”