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The specification of apprenticeship standards for Wales (SASW)



Guidance

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The specification of apprenticeship standards for Wales (SASW)

Audience	Sector Skills Councils, standard setting organisations, employers, trade unions, learning providers and awarding organisations.
Overview	The SASW gives guidance on the requirements for apprenticeship frameworks. Apprenticeship frameworks help to deliver high-quality apprenticeship programmes that equip individuals with the skills they need for successful careers and equip employers with the skilled workforce needed to help them compete and grow. This is the second version of SASW and replaces the version issued in April 2010.
Action required	With effect from August 2012 this version of SASW should be used in preparing or modifying apprenticeship framework documents.
Further information	Enquiries about this document should be directed to: Jan Coath Employability and Skills Division Department for Education and Skills Welsh Government Government Buildings Picton Terrace Carmarthen SA31 3BT Tel: 01267 225330 Fax: 01267 235964 e-mail: DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@wales.gsi.gov.uk
Additional copies	This document is only available electronically and can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/apprenticeships/providers/sasw
Related documents	<i>Draft Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW) (2010); Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) (Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2011)</i>

Contents

Part 1: The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW)	1
Introduction	1
Apprenticeship frameworks – general	1
Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks (Level 2)	3
Apprenticeship frameworks (Level 3)	7
Higher Apprenticeship frameworks (Level 4)	9
Higher Apprenticeship frameworks (Level 5 and Level 6)	11
Part 2: SASW – Information Requirement	14
Introduction	14
Equality and diversity	14
Entry conditions	14
Progression routes	15
Part 3: Framework guidance	16
Introduction	16
The role of a framework developer	16
The role of an Issuing Authority	18
Apprenticeship frameworks – general	19
Naming conventions for an apprenticeship framework	20
Qualifications – competence and knowledge	20
Essential Skills Wales (ESW)	23
Wider Key Skills	23
Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)	24
On- and off-the-job training	25

Part 1: The Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales

Introduction

1. The *Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW)* sets out the minimum requirements to be met by recognised Welsh apprenticeship frameworks. This is the second draft version, which replaces the draft published in April 2011, and can be used immediately to publish or revise Welsh apprenticeship frameworks. Compliance with the SASW will be a statutory requirement of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act upon commencement of the relevant provisions. Apprenticeship frameworks are specifications of requirements for the purpose of the issue of apprenticeship certificates that are at a stated level and relate to a particular skill, trade or occupation included in an apprenticeship sector.

The ASCL Act 2009 requires Issuing Authorities in exercising their functions to have regard to guidance given by the Welsh Ministers. The *Guidance* contained in Part 3 of this document is issued for information to Issuing Authorities, framework developers and other interested parties on a non-statutory basis.

Part 1 sets out the statutory requirements to be met by a recognised Welsh Apprenticeship framework. Part 2 sets out the additional non-statutory Information Requirement to be included in Welsh Apprenticeship frameworks. Part 3 contains the non statutory framework guidance.

ASCL Ref

Apprenticeship frameworks – general

2. An apprentice is entitled to an apprenticeship certificate if he or she completes a Welsh apprenticeship in relation to an apprenticeship framework by meeting either the standard completion conditions or the alternative completion conditions and has received the specified amounts of on-the-job and off-the-job training.

A person may apply for an apprenticeship certificate if he or she does not meet the standard or the alternative completion conditions but can nevertheless demonstrate he or she meets the requirements specified in a recognised Welsh framework, provided that the evidence supporting the claim is current and the qualifications held are identified on the Qualification and Credit Framework (QCF) database as pertaining to the framework.

<p>3. An apprenticeship framework must specify as a Welsh certificate requirement the total number of credits on the Qualifications and Credits Framework (QCF). This must be at a minimum of 37 credits except for Higher Apprenticeship frameworks which specify a Foundation Degree, HND or HNC to meet the relevant technical knowledge requirements where the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales (CQFW) credit values may be used.</p> <p>4. A framework must meet the needs of the skill, trade or occupation. Whilst 37 Credits is the minimum size, employer requirements may mean that in many cases frameworks will significantly exceed this. A framework should reflect the volume of learning required for an apprentice to achieve full competency in the skill, trade or occupation to which it relates.</p> <p>An apprenticeship framework must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the number of QCF credits that must be attained for the Competencies Qualification; b. the number of QCF credits that must be attained for the technical knowledge qualification; and c. the number of CQFW credits that must be attained for Essential Skills Wales and any Wider Key Skills qualifications stipulated as a Welsh Certificate requirement. Each Essential Skills Wales Award and Wider Key Skill Award attracts 6 credits. 	
<p>5. All qualifications contained in an apprenticeship framework should be current. Each qualification must be identified by Title, Level and the Qualification Reference Code.</p>	
<p>6. A framework must be reviewed periodically to ensure it is current and continues to meet the needs of the sector.</p> <p>A framework must carry both the date of its issue and the date by which it will be formally reviewed.</p>	

Foundation Apprenticeship frameworks (Level 2)

Qualifications related to the Sector	
<p>7. A foundation apprenticeship framework must specify as a Welsh certificate requirement the qualification or qualifications which an apprentice must hold. Any such qualifications specified in an apprenticeship framework must be those which have been accredited by the Welsh Ministers to at least Level 2 of the QCF, underpinned by National Occupational Standards (NOS); and be endorsed by the relevant Sector Skills Council (SSC) or Sector Body. The qualifications must provide the evidence that the apprentice has achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The competencies required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates. b. The technical knowledge required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates, together with knowledge and understanding of the industry and its market. c. The qualification nominated as the Competencies Qualification must be a Level 2 qualification from the QCF. 	
<p>8. A foundation apprenticeship framework must satisfy the requirement stated in 7, either by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Specifying one qualification demonstrating competence and one qualification demonstrating technical knowledge, each of which must carry at least ten credits on the QCF. b. Specifying one integrated qualification combining competence and knowledge which are separately assessed, each of which must carry at least ten credits on the QCF. 	
Essential Skills Wales	
<p>9. A foundation apprenticeship framework must specify as a Welsh certificate requirement Essential Skills Wales qualifications in Communication and Application of Number to at least Level 1.</p>	
<p>10. A foundation apprenticeship framework may specify as a Welsh certificate requirement, where Essential Skills Wales qualification(s) in Communication and/or Application of Number at Level 1 are held, relevant Essential Skills Wales</p>	

qualification(s) at Level 2.	
11. A foundation apprenticeship framework may specify as a Welsh certificate requirement, Essential Skills Wales qualifications in Communication and/or Application of Number at Level 2.	
12. A foundation apprenticeship framework may specify as a Welsh certificate requirement, the acceptance of Key Skills qualifications as alternatives to Essential Skills Wales qualifications, provided the Key Skills Certificate(s) attained are at the same level(s) as those specified for the Essential Skills Wales qualifications.	
13. A foundation apprenticeship framework may specify as a Welsh certificate requirement an Essential Skills Wales qualification in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to at least Level 1, where employers in the sector and other relevant partners determine that ICT is required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates.	

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

14. A foundation apprenticeship framework must specify the standard of attainment in the Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR) national outcomes in the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates. To achieve the ERR national outcomes the apprentice must demonstrate that he/she:

- Knows and understands the range of employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities under Employment Law. This should cover the apprentice's rights and responsibilities under the Employment Rights Act 1996, Equality Act 2010 and Health & Safety legislation, together with the responsibilities and duties of employers;
- Knows and understands the procedures and documentation in their organisation which recognises and protects their relationship with their employer. Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity training must be an integral part of the apprentice's learning programme;
- Knows and understands the range of sources of information and advice available to them on their employment rights and responsibilities. Details of Access to Work and Additional Learning Support must be included in the programme;
- Understands the role played by their occupation within their organisation and industry;
- Has an informed view of the types of career pathways that are open to them;
- Knows the types of representative bodies and understands their relevance to their skill, trade or occupation, and their main roles and responsibilities;
- Knows where and how to get information and advice on their industry, occupation, training and career;
- Can describe and work within their organisation's principles and codes of practice;
- Recognises and can form a view on issues of public concern that affect their organisation and industry.

15. An apprenticeship framework must specify where achievement of the ERR is located within the framework, either within a qualification or elsewhere, and how achievement is to be evidenced.	
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Wider Key Skills	
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16. A foundation apprenticeship framework may specify the standards of attainment in the Wider Key Skills of Improving Own Learning and Performance, and/or Problem Solving and/or Working With Others, where the Issuing Authority, in consultation with employers in the sector and other relevant partners, determines that one or more of the Wider Key Skills is directly relevant to effective performance in either the occupation or the employment sector.	
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A foundation apprenticeship framework may specify as a Welsh Certificate requirement that one or more of the three Wider Key Skills is required to at least level 1.

One or more of the Wider Key Skills may be stipulated as the means to transfer and contextualize learning in a workplace setting for competence-based qualifications attained prior to entering an apprenticeship.

On-the-job training and Off-the-job training	
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17. A foundation apprenticeship framework must specify the total number of learning hours that an apprentice must receive to complete the framework.	
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18. A foundation apprenticeship framework must specify the total number of off-the-job learning hours that an apprentice must receive to complete the framework.	
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19. A foundation apprenticeship framework must specify the total number of on-the-job learning hours that an apprentice must receive to complete the framework.	
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20. An apprenticeship framework must specify that on-and off-the-job training must either have been received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Whilst working under an apprenticeship agreement; or b. During a qualifying period ending on the date of application for an apprenticeship certificate. A qualifying period of five years is recommended, but to meet the needs of their sector, frameworks may set a shorter or longer 	
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<p>timescale than five years as the qualifying period.</p> <p>c. An apprenticeship framework may specify that off-the-job training undertaken before the apprentice started their apprenticeship may count towards the off-the-job training required for the apprenticeship if it was undertaken in relation to an accredited qualification contained in the framework for which an apprenticeship certificate is to be applied for.</p>	
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Additional Employer Requirements

<p>21. A framework may specify a qualification (or Units) of up to a maximum of six Credits either from the QCF or from the Quality Assured Lifelong Learning (QALL) pillar of the CQFW to meet specific employer requirements.</p>	
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Apprenticeship frameworks (Level 3)

Qualifications related to the Sector

<p>22. An apprenticeship framework must specify the qualification or qualifications required as a Welsh certificate requirement. Any such qualifications specified in apprenticeship level 3 frameworks must be underpinned by National Occupational Standards (NOS). The qualifications must be accredited by the Welsh Ministers at Level 3 on the QCF and be endorsed by the relevant Sector Skills Council or Sector Body. The qualifications must provide the evidence that the individual applying for a certificate has achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The competencies required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates. b. The competencies and technical knowledge required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates, together with knowledge and understanding of the industry and its market. c. The qualification nominated as the Competencies Qualification must be a Level 3 from the QCF. 	
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<p>An apprenticeship (Level 3) framework must satisfy the requirement stated in paragraph 22, either by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Specifying one qualification demonstrating competence and one qualification demonstrating technical knowledge, each of which must carry at least ten credits on the QCF. b. Specifying an integrated qualification demonstrating competence and technical knowledge which are separately assessed, each of which must carry at least ten credits on the QCF. 	
<p>23. An apprenticeship framework may include as technical knowledge qualifications, or units from a combined qualification containing both competencies and technical knowledge, the attainment of which, as part of the framework, is known to give access to higher education courses relevant to the sector.</p>	

Essential Skills Wales

<p>24. Requirements are as for a Foundation Apprenticeship (Level 2) framework, save that:</p> <p>An apprenticeship framework must specify as a Welsh certificate requirement Essential Skills Wales qualifications in Communication and Application of Number to at least Level 2.</p>	
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Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

<p>25. Requirements are as for a Foundation Apprenticeship (Level 2) framework.</p>	
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Wider Key Skills

<p>26. Requirements are as for a Foundation Apprenticeship framework, save that:</p> <p>An apprenticeship framework may specify as a Welsh Certificate requirement that one or more of the three Wider Key Skills is required to at least level 2.</p>	
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On-the-job training and Off-the-job training

27. Requirements are as for a Foundation Apprenticeship framework.

Additional Employer Requirements

28. Where a skill, trade or occupation requires a recognised 'Licence to Practise' for a person to be deemed lawfully competent (for example, Gas Boiler Fitting), then these qualifications may be included as mandatory in a level 3 framework.

A framework may specify a qualification (or Units) of up to a maximum of six Credits either from the QCF or from the Quality Assured Lifelong Learning (QALL) pillar of the CQFW, to meet specific employer requirements.

Higher Apprenticeship frameworks (Level 4)

Qualifications related to the Sector

29. A higher apprenticeship framework (level 4) must specify the qualification or qualifications required as a Welsh certificate requirement. Any such qualifications specified in apprenticeship level 4 frameworks must be underpinned by National Occupational Standards (NOS). The qualifications must be accredited by the Welsh Ministers at Level 4 on the QCF and be endorsed by the relevant Sector Skills Council or Sector Body. The qualifications must provide the evidence that the individual applying for a certificate has achieved:

- a. The competencies required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates.
- b. The competencies and technical knowledge required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates, together with knowledge and understanding of the industry and its market.
- c. The qualification nominated as the Competencies Qualification must be a Level 4 from the QCF.

<p>A higher apprenticeship (level 4) framework must satisfy the requirement stated in paragraph 29 above, either by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Specifying one qualification demonstrating competence and one qualification demonstrating technical knowledge, each of which must carry at least ten credits on the QCF. b. Specifying an integrated qualification demonstrating competence and technical knowledge which are separately assessed, each of which must carry at least ten credits on the QCF. c. Specifying an HNC, HND or Foundation Degree as the relevant technical knowledge. 	
<p>30. A higher apprenticeship (Level 4) framework may include as technical knowledge qualifications, or units from a combined qualification containing both competencies and technical knowledge, the attainment of which, as part of the framework, is known to give access to higher education courses relevant to the sector.</p>	

Essential Skills Wales

31. Requirements are as for an Apprenticeship (Level 3) framework.

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

32. Requirements are as for a Foundation Apprenticeship (Level 2) framework.

Wider Key Skills

33. Requirements are as for a Foundation Apprenticeship framework, save that:

A higher apprenticeship (Level 4) framework may specify as a Welsh Certificate requirement that one or more of the three Wider Key Skills is required to at least level 2.

On-the-job training and Off-the-job training

34. Requirements are as for a Foundation Apprenticeship framework.

Additional Employer Requirements

35. Requirements are as for an Apprenticeship (Level 3) framework.

Higher Apprenticeship frameworks (Level 5 and Level 6)

Qualifications related to the Sector

A higher apprenticeship framework (level 5 or 6) must specify as a Welsh certificate requirement the qualification or qualifications to be held. Any such qualifications specified in an Apprenticeship framework must be underpinned by National Occupational Standards (NOS) and be endorsed by the relevant Sector Skills Council or Sector Body. The qualifications must provide the evidence that the individual applying for a certificate has achieved:

- a. The competencies required to perform in the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates.
- b. The competencies and technical knowledge required to perform such skill, trade or occupation.
- c. The qualification nominated as the Competencies Qualification must either be a Level 5 or 6 qualification from the QCF, or
- d. A competencies qualification awarded by a recognised body that confers eligibility for membership at the appropriate level by a relevant professional organisation such as a Chartered Institute.

36. A higher apprenticeship framework (level 5 or 6) must satisfy the requirement stated in paragraph 36 above, either by:

- a. Specifying one qualification demonstrating competence and one qualification demonstrating technical knowledge, each of which must carry at least ten credits on the QCF.
- b. Specifying one qualification combining competence and knowledge which are separately assessed, each of which must carry at least ten credits on the QCF.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Specifying one qualification conferring eligibility for professional membership that is the equivalent of at least ten CQFW credits at Level 5 or 6. d. Specifying a Higher Education qualification at either level 5 or Level 6 which carries at least ten credits on the CQFW as the relevant technical knowledge. e. Specifying an HNC, HND or Foundation Degree as the relevant technical knowledge. 	
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Essential Skills Wales

37. Requirements are as for an Apprenticeship (Level 3) framework.

Wider Key Skills

38. A higher apprenticeship (Level 5/6) framework may specify as a Welsh Certificate requirement that one or more of the three Wider Key Skills is required at level 4 in Improving Own Learning and Performance, Working With Others and Problem Solving.

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

39. A higher apprenticeship (level 5 / 6) framework may specify as a Welsh certificate requirement the achievement of ERR where employers in the sector and other relevant partners determine that it is required to perform the skill, trade or occupation at this level.

On-the-job training and Off-the-job training

40. Requirements are as for a Foundation Apprenticeship framework.

Additional Employer Requirements

41. A higher apprenticeship framework (level 5 or 6) may specify a qualification that confers eligibility for membership at the appropriate level by a relevant professional body.
42. A framework may specify a qualification (or Units) of up to a maximum of six Credits either from the QCF or from the Quality Assured Lifelong Learning (QALL) pillar of the CQFW to meet specific employer requirements.

Part 2: SASW – Information Requirement

Introduction

43. Part 2 - the Information Requirement - sets out the non-statutory requirements for information on equality and diversity, entry conditions and progression routes to be included in apprenticeship frameworks.

Equality and diversity

44. It is important that apprenticeship frameworks are inclusive and can demonstrate an active approach to identifying and removing barriers to entry and progression. Apprenticeship frameworks must promote equality of access for those with a learning difficulty. Specifically, a framework must include a statement setting out:

- Whether and where there is under-representation of disabled persons or, those from ethnic minority groups or where there is a gender imbalance from within the skill, trade or occupational area;
- The barriers to entry and progression for individuals within these groups;
- What action has been taken to remove these barriers or to justify them objectively In relation to the framework

Entry conditions

45. An apprenticeship framework must specify any entry conditions which are considered necessary to ensure that individuals entering the apprenticeship can complete the framework.

An apprenticeship framework must specify the evidence and justification for any entry conditions and must demonstrate that any entry conditions set comply with the principles of equality and diversity.

The entry conditions may be demonstrated by prior achievement of qualifications which the framework developer, in consultation with employers and other relevant partners, considers necessary. Where the entry conditions are demonstrated by prior qualifications the framework developer must include alternatives to ensure equality of access for people with a learning difficulty. Alternatives may include a portfolio of evidence based on work experience, non-accredited courses, volunteering or other extra-curricular activities which provide evidence that the individual has the potential to complete the framework.

An apprenticeship framework must specify any legal restrictions that limit entry to the apprenticeship.

Progression routes

46. An apprenticeship framework must specify the progression routes into the framework and the progression opportunities open to a person who has completed the framework. It must specify avenues of career progression including those through training with sector employers and/or through further or higher education.

An apprenticeship framework must specify the occupations and/or job roles which, on completion of the framework, the individual would be qualified to undertake.

An apprenticeship framework must give details of clear entry routes into apprenticeships including how other qualifications such as GCSEs, A levels, general vocational qualifications or achievement of the Welsh Baccalaureate can lead into an apprenticeship and possibly count towards the achievement of an apprenticeship.

A significant number of potential apprentices will be undertaking learning in a "Pathways to Apprenticeship" programme of which apprenticeships is one of the recognised outcomes.

An apprenticeship framework must take into consideration progression routes into apprenticeships for people with a learning difficulty who may enter through employability programmes and atypical routes.

An apprenticeship framework must highlight those elements of the framework that would enable an apprentice to transfer either between frameworks within a sector or across sectors.

An apprenticeship framework at level 3 must specify at least one foundation apprenticeship framework at level 2 which qualifies the person for entry, except where there is no relevant foundation apprenticeship framework.

A Higher Apprenticeship framework (levels 4, 5 and 6) must specify at least one Apprenticeship framework at level 3 which qualifies a person for entry, except where there is no relevant apprenticeship framework.

An apprenticeship framework may include UCAS guidance or tariff points for any relevant qualifications it contains.

Apprenticeship frameworks at level 3 and above must include information on opportunities for progression to a higher education qualification, including a degree, Foundation degree or other higher level qualification(s) relevant to the sector.

Higher Apprenticeship frameworks (levels 4, 5 and 6) must state if achievement of the framework has been recognised or endorsed for membership of a relevant professional body.

Part 3: Framework guidance

ASCL Ref

Introduction	
<p>G1. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act (ASCLA) introduced the <i>Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW)</i>. The SASW sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised Welsh apprenticeship framework. The Issuing Authorities, designated by the Welsh Ministers, are responsible for ensuring that only those frameworks which comply with the SASW are issued as recognised Welsh frameworks.</p>	
<p>G2. The ASCLA also introduces the role of the certifying authority for Wales. The certifying authority, designated by the Welsh Ministers, will issue an Apprenticeship Certificate only where the standard completion conditions or the alternative completion conditions of a recognised Welsh apprenticeship framework have been met.</p>	
<p>G3. To be recognised, apprenticeship frameworks will need to meet the requirements specified by the SASW.</p> <p>G4. The Welsh Government recognises Apprenticeships against frameworks which meet the requirements specified by the SASW. To ensure that apprentices can complete Apprenticeships started against previous 'blueprint' specifications, the Welsh Ministers will provide for existing frameworks to be treated as frameworks issued under the Act. Similarly, the Welsh Ministers may provide for other 'blueprint' frameworks to be treated as frameworks issued under the Act in an occupational area for which demand has been recognised and agreed by the Welsh Government but where a SASW framework has not yet been issued.</p>	
<p>G5. A separate 'Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE)' was introduced in April 2011. Wherever possible, we seek consistencies between the specifications for the two countries. However, the specifications are not the same and are not inter-changeable.</p>	
The role of a framework developer	
<p>G6. Anyone, including an individual or a company, may develop an apprenticeship framework. Those who wish to develop an Apprenticeship framework may either 'propose' a framework idea, or submit a draft framework to the Issuing Authority. The draft framework will set out the qualifications and</p>	

any other requirements of the SASW. The Issuing Authority may require the framework developer to provide information or evidence in connection with the draft as the Issuing Authority thinks appropriate. An electronic system, 'Apprenticeships Frameworks Online' (AFO) is the web-based 'portal' and repository for developing and issuing frameworks. It can be accessed at:

<http://www.afo.sscalliance.org/>

G7. Following submission of a draft framework, the Issuing Authority will notify the framework developer within ten working days if the framework does not meet the requirements specified by the SASW and therefore cannot be issued.

G8. A framework will only be issued if the Issuing Authority is satisfied that the framework has been developed in accordance with the Quality Assurance system or processes in force at the time. The current Quality Assurance system for SASW frameworks is available on AFO and may be revised or updated from time to time.

G9. A framework developer may request the assistance and support of the relevant Sector Skills Council, Standard Setting Organisation or other expert consultancy in developing a new framework. Such organisations may charge a fee for this service.

G10. Generally, SSCs or Standard Setting Organisations will be framework developers as they represent their sector and employers. Non-SSC/SSO framework developers should work closely with their SSC/SSO to ensure that their proposed draft framework meets the needs of the sector.

G11. Within apprenticeship framework development, the Welsh Government expects SSCs to:

- Promote framework standards for the sector which go beyond the minimum requirements of the SASW.
- Promote coherence in the range of apprenticeship frameworks available within their sector, taking account of duplication or overlaps between related skills, trades or occupations or changes in National Occupational Standards and revisions to qualifications on the QCF.
- Reduce the potential for the duplication of frameworks within a sector through endorsing that only appropriate competencies qualifications have been specified in related skills, trades or occupations within a single framework, rather than the same competencies qualification appearing in more

<p>than one framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withhold their endorsement for a framework if it does not demonstrate sufficient breadth across the skill, trade or occupation. • Notify the Issuing Authority if they withhold their endorsement for a framework. 	
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The role of the Issuing Authority	
<p>G12. Issuing Authorities are designated by the Welsh Ministers. The Welsh Ministers will designate a person to issue Apprenticeship frameworks relating to a particular apprenticeship sector.</p> <p>G13. In instances where the Issuing Authority and framework developer belong to the same organisation, the organisation is required to have arrangements and procedures in place to appropriately manage any conflicts of interest between functions that affect the operation of the regulated functions it performs.</p>	
<p>G14. Recognised apprenticeship frameworks are those issued by the Issuing Authority designated by the Welsh Ministers to issue frameworks relating to that particular sector. The framework must relate to a particular skill, trade or occupation included in an apprenticeship sector.</p>	
<p>G15. The Issuing Authority must only issue frameworks which the authority is satisfied meet the requirements specified in the SASW. The Issuing Authority must comply with directions given by the Welsh Ministers and have regard to the Guidance given by the Welsh Ministers.</p>	
<p>G16. The Issuing Authority will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue frameworks which they are satisfied meet the requirements specified by the SASW and will maintain their currency; • Notify the Welsh Ministers of the issue or withdrawal of a framework and any changes to a framework. <p>G17. The Issuing Authority may reject or withdraw a framework even if it complies with the requirements specified by the SASW if the relevant Sector Skills Council does not endorse it.</p>	
<p>G18. The Issuing Authority will notify the framework</p>	

developer within ten working days if the framework has been rejected. The Issuing Authority must give the framework developer reasons for its decision.	
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Apprenticeship frameworks – general

G19. Apprenticeship frameworks must consist of a minimum of 37 credits on the QCF or from the CQFW where a Higher Apprenticeship specifies a Foundation degree or HND or HNC.

G20. The framework developer will decide the balance of credits.

However, there must be:

- At minimum of ten credits achieved through a competence based qualification or competence element of an integrated qualification, which specifically relates to the skill, trade or occupation and is based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) from the employment sector for which the framework is designed and be at a level which reflects the job role; and
- A minimum of ten credits from a knowledge-based qualification or knowledge element of an integrated qualification, which provides the technical knowledge and understanding of the theoretical concepts specifically relating to the skill, trade or occupation to underpin occupational competence. The knowledge qualification/element must equip the apprentice with the knowledge and understanding of the industry and its market.
- A minimum of the equivalent of at least ten credits from a competencies qualification (non-CQFW) recognised by a professional body for a Higher Apprenticeship at level 5 or 6, the attainment of which satisfies eligibility for membership.
- Framework developers should consider the needs of Welsh speaking apprentices and promote opportunities to learn through the medium of the Welsh language. A Good Practice Guide for sector and standard setting bodies has been published by the Welsh Government to assist in determining the demand for Welsh language skills, Welsh translations of national occupational standards and vocational qualifications through the medium of Welsh. The guide can be found on the Welsh Government website at :

http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/qualification/sin_wales/welshmedium/welshmediumguidance/

Naming conventions for an apprenticeship framework

G21. A framework should contain all the levels required that cover a specific skill, trade or occupational area. Separate framework documents covering individual levels within the same skill, trade or occupational area should not be issued. Higher Apprenticeship frameworks at levels 5 or 6 may be issued separately if they have been endorsed by the relevant professional body as providing eligibility for membership.

G22. Frameworks do not need to cover the whole range of levels. For example, dependent on the nature of skill, trade or occupation concerned, it may be inappropriate to include a Foundation level in a framework. In other occupations, dependent on the nature of the job roles at Level 4 or above, it may not be necessary for a framework to contain a Higher Apprenticeship at any level.

G23. A framework may include different 'pathways' that differentiate the range of different job roles available within the occupation.

G24. A framework title should describe the skill, trade or occupational area it covers. A framework title should not include the words "Foundation Apprenticeship", "Apprenticeship" or "Higher Apprenticeship".

G25. Where a Higher Apprenticeship framework has been endorsed / recognised for entry by a professional body, the title of the framework may reflect terminology recognised by the sector.

G26. A framework must be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains current. As a minimum, a framework must be reviewed at least every five years. A framework may be reviewed and updated more frequently, should the skill, trade or occupation require it.

Qualifications – competence and knowledge

G27. Apprenticeships consist of a competence element and a technical knowledge element which, for the majority of existing Apprenticeship frameworks, have had separate 'competence' and 'knowledge' qualifications. Whilst historically these were known as NVQs and technical certificates, framework developers are not confined to these qualifications. Furthermore, the QCF has brought increased opportunity for combining units from qualifications which were previously separate. The SASW allows for the elements to be combined in a single integrated qualification should SSCs and employers want this. The SASW defines relevant occupational competencies as the competencies required to perform the

<p>skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates at the level required in the framework. National Occupational Standards (NOS) are used to underpin all vocational qualifications on the QCF. NOS are employer-led specifications of competent performance, required in different sectors across the UK, which provide the technical requirements of an occupation as well as the necessary performance criteria. The relevant technical knowledge is defined as the technical knowledge required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates at the level required in the framework.</p>	
<p>G28. Where the knowledge and competence elements are combined and accredited as a single integrated qualification, the two elements must be separately identified and separately assessed. It is important to retain this distinction between the two elements to ensure apprentices not only demonstrate the competence to do the job, but also develop the underpinning technical skills, knowledge and understanding. It also allows for individuals to gain credit towards an Apprenticeship through prior participation in other programmes e.g. the Welsh Baccalaureate where particular options may well include the technical knowledge elements of an Apprenticeship.</p>	
<p>G29. Where an Apprenticeship framework includes separate competence and technical knowledge qualifications, the competence qualification must be nominated as the 'Competencies Qualification'. Where there is an integrated qualification, this will be the 'Competencies Qualification'. For an apprentice to meet the standard completion conditions of the Act, the course of training leading to this qualification must be undertaken while the apprentice is working under an Apprenticeship Agreement. It is important that the 'Competencies Qualification' is, or includes, the competence elements as these are the skills that are required to perform the skill, trade or occupation to which the framework relates.</p>	
<p>G30. An Apprenticeship framework may allow for a choice of qualification by including a range of competence, knowledge and integrated qualifications. Different apprentices may be suited to different types of qualifications, all of which must fulfil the requirements set out in the previous paragraphs. Only those qualifications specified by title may be recognised for the issue of an apprenticeship certificate. Alternative or similar qualifications that are not so specified in a framework cannot be substituted.</p>	
<p>G31. Unless the knowledge requirements are specified through a Foundation Degree/HND/HNC, an Apprenticeship framework must specify that the method of assessment of the competence and knowledge qualifications (or of the integrated</p>	

<p>competence/knowledge qualification) will be subject to any regulation by qualification regulators. Assessment of the knowledge qualification or element must be externally verified.</p>	
<p>G32. Foundation Degrees, or HNDs and HNCs may be used to satisfy the relevant technical knowledge requirements for Higher Apprenticeship frameworks. Vocational First Degrees may be used to satisfy the relevant technical knowledge for Higher Apprenticeships at Level 6.</p> <p>G33. A Higher Apprenticeship framework which contains either a foundation degree or first degree must either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the specific qualification(s) by title and the name of the awarding organisation(s) or the educational institution(s) offering the qualification(s), or • Clearly specify where the list of higher education qualifications recognised for apprenticeship certification can be found. 	
<p>G34. The SASW specifies the minimum size of qualifications (by reference to the number of credits) to be included in all frameworks. An Issuing Authority must be satisfied that the size of the competencies qualification in a framework contains a sufficient volume of learning to ensure full competence for the skill, trade or occupation.</p> <p>G35. The CQFW is the Credit and Qualification Framework for Wales. It is an over-arching framework of qualifications that includes three main 'pillars' (or types) of qualifications. These 'pillars' include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The QCF – which contains vocational qualifications regulated for use in England and Wales; • Higher Education qualifications offered by universities or other Higher Education Institutions in Wales; and • The 'QALL' pillar – which enables quality-assured units that sit outside the current regulatory framework to be recognised for the award of credit. <p>SASW specifies the CQFW, QCF or QALL in relation to different types of qualifications that may be included as elements within a framework. Framework developers should ensure they only include qualifications that meet the specific framework requirement: for example where the QCF is specified in SASW a qualification included in a framework must come from the QCF and cannot come from other 'pillars' of the CQFW. More information about CQFW can be accessed on the Welsh Government website at:</p>	

<p>http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/qualificationsinwales/creditqualificationsframework/</p>	
<p>G36. An apprenticeship framework may specify activities or other arrangements required for the Recognition of Prior Learning for whole, part or Credits of qualifications achieved prior to entry into an apprenticeship agreement. These arrangements may include activities to ensure the apprentice is given opportunities within the workplace for up-dating or contextualising the application of prior learning, including the use of one or more of the Wider Key Skills Awards as a method to facilitate this.</p>	

Essential Skills Wales (ESW)

<p>G37. To promote progression, where an individual has achieved Essential Skills Wales (ESW) qualifications at Level 1 in either Application of Number, Communication or ICT (if the framework requires this) or has the relevant key skill prior to starting a Level 2 Apprenticeship, the employer may allow the individual to study for ESW Skills qualifications at Level 2 as part of the Apprenticeship framework. Frameworks should be written in such a way as to encourage employers to allow the individual to progress to ESW Skills at Level 2 as part of an Apprenticeship framework.</p>	
<p>G38. Key Skills Certificates in Application of Number, Communication and ICT at the required levels will satisfy the requirement for Essential Skills Wales as they are recognised as equivalents to ESW.</p>	
<p>G39. Essential Skills Wales certificates at the level specified in the framework achieved prior to commencing an apprenticeship may be accepted for apprenticeship certification when the relevant ESW certificates are presented. Essential Skills Wales qualifications achieved in the context of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) can be accepted, provided the specific certification of the title(s) and level(s) of those ESW qualifications is provided. The WBQ certificate itself does not provide this specific evidence.</p>	

Wider Key Skills

<p>G40. Frameworks may specify the outcomes which an apprentice is to achieve in any or all of the Wider Key Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving Own Learning and Performance. • Working With Others. 	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem Solving. <p>Wider Key Skills qualifications achieved in the context of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification (WBQ) can be accepted, provided the specific certification of the title(s) and level(s) of those qualifications is provided. The WBQ certificate does not provide this specific evidence.</p>	
<p>G41. Framework developers are urged to give close consideration to the inclusion of the Wider Key Skills Awards at level 4 in future versions of Higher Apprenticeship frameworks, particularly at levels 5 and 6. Wider Key Skills at level 4 offer a competence-based approach for apprentices to develop high level skills in self-management. The Welsh Government will seek to work closely with SSCs to further investigate the relevance and application of these Level 4 Awards within Higher Apprenticeship frameworks.</p>	
<p>G42. A framework developer, in consultation with employers in the sector and other relevant partners, should determine whether any or all of the Wider Key Skills is directly relevant to effective performance in the particular skill, trade or occupation or the sector.</p> <p>G43. The framework must contain reasons why Wider Key Skills have not been specified or may specify where the achievement of wider key skill competencies is located, either within a qualification or elsewhere, if appropriate.</p>	
<p>G44. The Wider Key Skills are likely to be replaced with “Wider Essential Skills” qualifications (or other new nomenclature) in the future. All references within SASW to Wider Key Skills will also apply to Wider Essential Skills when they become available.</p>	

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

<p>G45. An apprenticeship framework must specify the outcomes which an apprentice is to achieve in the rights and responsibilities of employees in their current occupation and those occupation(s) to which the framework leads. An apprenticeship framework must be designed to support achievement of the nine ERR national outcomes. Achievement of ERR outcomes must be based on evidence that is subject to quality assurance.</p>	
<p>G46. ERR must be formally assessed. However, there is flexibility for the framework to specify the method of</p>	

assessment and whether it should be accredited. ERR must be explicitly identified and clearly signposted within the framework.	
G47. The course of training in ERR must be designed so that the apprentice has been assessed against all the elements specified in SASW.	
G48. ERR outcomes are not mandatory for Higher Apprenticeship frameworks at levels 5 or 6.	

On- and off-the-job training

<p>G49. The balance of on- and off-the-job training will vary depending on the nature of the framework. The balance will be determined by the framework developer in consultation with the Issuing Authority. All on- and off-the-job training specified in the framework must be delivered within contracted working hours.</p> <p>G50. The balance of on- and off-the-job training will vary depending on the previous experience and attainment of the learner. Where a learner enters an apprenticeship having previously attained the competencies qualification, Issuing Authorities are encouraged to set out arrangements for on-the-job training programmes that customise the learning to the workplace. Customisation programmes may include selecting appropriate additional Unit(s) from QCF qualifications, the Wider Key Skills or other competency-based qualifications relevant to the workplace.</p>	
<p>G51. An Apprenticeship framework must specify that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-the-job and off-the-job training hours are both planned, reviewed and evaluated jointly between the apprentice and a tutor, or teacher; their workplace supervisor or manager and, where relevant, the apprentice's coach or mentor. • On-the-job and off-the-job training support via a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager is made available when required by the apprentice. • On-the-job and off-the-job training hours are delivered through one or more of the following methods: individual and group teaching; e-learning; distance learning; coaching; mentoring; feedback & assessment; collaborative/networked learning with peers; guided study. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional guidance on recording on-the-job and off-the-job hours in a framework document is available to framework developers when logged on AFO.	
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