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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Apprenticeship Pathway

in

Commercial, Procurement and Supply

The content of this Pathway has been agreed by Commercial, Procurement Steering Group. This is the only Apprenticeship Pathway in the Procurement sector approved for use in Wales that is eligible for Welsh Government funding.

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LEARNING PROGRAMME CONTENT

The Learning Programme provision shall comprise of three mandatory elements:

- Qualifications,
- Essential Skills
- On/off the job training

The total minimum credit value required for the Level 3 Pathway Commercial, Procurement and Supply Apprenticeship is 61 credits.

The total minimum credit value required for the Level 4 Pathway Commercial, Procurement and Supply Apprenticeship is 105 credits.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Employers wish to attract new entrants to the profession who have an interest in working in the commercial procurement and supply profession.

The profession offers a diverse range of career opportunities across the commercial cycle seen in 'Job Roles' and various routes for career progression.

The selection process by employers (or in partnership with learning providers) may include initial assessment where applicants will be asked if they have any qualifications or experience that can be accredited against the requirements of the apprenticeship.

Apprentices along with meeting the pathway entry requirements will need to be able to comply with the Pre-Employment Checks of the employing organisation.

Level 3: It is recommended that the candidate has English and Maths GCSE's grade C or above (or equivalent qualifications). Please note, applicants for this pathway must be 16+ years.

Level 4: It is recommended that the candidate has English and Maths at minimum GCSE's grade C or above (or equivalent qualifications) together with relevant Level 3 qualification. These would typically include two or more A levels, related diplomas (or NVQs) or an equivalent qualification. However, these recommendations are not essential. Please note, applicants for this pathway must be 18+ years.

APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAY LEARNING PROGRAMME(S)

Level 3: Apprenticeship Commercial, Procurement and Supply

Qualifications

Participants must achieve both of the following competence and knowledge qualification below.

| Level 3 – Open Awards - Certificate in Procurement and Supply Operations (Wales) (Occupational Qualification) | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Awarding Body | Qualification No. | Credit Value | Total Qualification Time | Competence / Knowledge / Combined | Qualification Assessment Language(s) |
| Open Awards | C00/4940/5 | 19 | 190 | Competence | English and Welsh |

| Level 3 - Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply - Advanced Certificate in Procurement and Supply Operations (IVET) | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Awarding Body | Qualification No. | Credit Value | Total Qualification Time | Competence / Knowledge / Combined | Qualification Assessment Language(s) |
| Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply | 603/3283/9 | 30 | 300 | Knowledge | English Only |

Essential Skills Wales (ESW)

Essential Skills Wales qualifications assessment languages are English-Welsh

| Level 3: Commercial, Procurement and Supply | Level | Minimum Credit Value |
|---|-------|----------------------|
| Communication | 2 | 6 |
| Application of Number | 2 | 6 |
| Digital Literacy | N/A | N/A |

On/Off the Job Training

| Pathway | Minimum On the Job Training Hours | Minimum Off the Job Training Hours |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Level 3: Commercial, Procurement and Supply | 230 | 260 |

On/Off the Job Qualification details (Minimum Credit & Hours)

The competence qualification is a total of 19 credits and the knowledge qualification 30 credits

The total amount of training hours - which includes both on and off-the-job learning for this Pathway is 490 training hours.

On/Off the Job Essential Skills details (Minimum Credit & Hours)

- 6 credits / 60 GLH Level 2 Essential Skills Wales Communication
- 6 credits / 60 GLH Level 2 Essential Skills Wales Application of Number

Level 4: Apprenticeship in Commercial, Procurement and Supply

Qualifications

Participants must achieve both of the following *competence and knowledge* qualification below.

| Level 4 - Open Awards – Certificate in Procurement and Supply Management (Wales) | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Awarding Body | Qualification No. | Credit Value | Total Qualification Time | Competence / Knowledge / Combined | Qualification Assessment Language(s) |
| Open Awards | C00/4940/6 | 33 | 330 | Competence | English and Welsh |

| Level 4 – Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply Diploma in Procurement and Supply | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Awarding Body | Qualification No. | Credit Value | Total Qualification Time | Competence / Knowledge / Combined | Qualification Assessment Language(s) |
| Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply | 603/3924/X | 60 | 600 | Knowledge | English Only |

Essential Skills Wales (ESW)

Essential Skills Wales qualifications assessment languages are English-Welsh

| Level 4: Commercial, Procurement and Supply | Level | Minimum Credit Value |
|---|-------|----------------------|
| Communication | 2 | 6 |
| Application of Number | 2 | 6 |
| Digital Literacy | N/A | N/A |

On/Off the Job Training

| Pathway | Minimum On the Job Training Hours | Minimum Off the Job Training Hours |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Level 4: Commercial, Procurement and Supply | 590 | 340 |

On/Off the Job Qualification details (Minimum Credit & Hours)

The competence qualification is a total of 33 credits and the knowledge qualification 60 credits

The total amount of training hours - which includes both on and off-the-job learning for this Pathway is 930 training hours.

On/Off the Job Essential Skills details (Minimum Credit & Hours)

- 6 credits / 60 GLH Level 2 Essential Skills Wales Communication
- 6 credits / 60 GLH Level 2 Essential Skills Wales Application of Number

OTHER ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Learners will be asked to declare any criminal convictions, bankruptcy or CCJs at the time of registration.

JOB ROLES

The procurement sector in Wales plays a crucial role in the Welsh economy. The public sector alone spends over £8 billion annually on goods, services, and works, while in the private sector, approximately 40%-70% of organisations spend is on purchased goods, services and works.

It is a vital component of business operations, not only ensuring the efficient and effective acquisition of goods, services and works but presents a huge opportunity to impact social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being through informed purchasing decisions and effective contract management across all sectors.

The sector is faced by a period of ongoing instability and insecurity contributed by macroeconomic events. These events have demonstrated the importance of procurement in the identification of solutions to manage risk, reduce volatility whilst increasing value across complex and fragile supply chains.

Whilst there is a public sector dominance in Wales encompassing health and social care, education, local authorities, and other key public service organisations. The Welsh Government's Economic Action Plan sets out key priorities to stimulate economic growth, increase productivity and make Wales fairer and more competitive. Achieving this ambition requires the right commercial skills across all sectors.

As the profession is faced by a vast scarcity of talent, apprentices engaging in this pathway will enter at an exciting time and gain the skills and experiences needed to develop a fulfilling career in procurement.

The pathways at a Level 3 and Level 4 supported by the Chartered Procurement and Supply Certificate (Level 3) and Diploma (Level 4) will allow apprentices to gain knowledge of the tools and methodologies to support the industry priorities, including but not limited to relationship management, sourcing, negotiation, contract management, financial awareness, risk management and strategic planning. Whilst the Open Awards qualification developed with Welsh professionals will support the attainment of the experience to demonstrate application of the skills in a working environment.

The job roles and progression routes are vast across industries and sectors and whilst job roles and responsibilities will vary according to the structure of the procurement and supply function, the skills obtained during the apprenticeship will be transferable across industries and sectors underpinned by two valuable qualifications.

Level 3:

Apprenticeships at Level 3 would be expected to be in tactical / entry procurement roles with no or very limited managerial responsibility, in low risk and responsibility roles. Apprenticeships would be supporting or assisting in procurement activity of senior team members.

The typical job roles expected of apprenticeships at Level 3:

Purchasing Assistant, Procurement Assistant, Assistant Buyer, Administrative Assistant, Stock Controller, Contracts Administrator, Inventory Planner, Assistant Contracts Officer, Procurement Support Officer

Example roles and description at Level 3:

Procurement Assistant: Supports senior procurement professionals with administrative tasks and data entry.

Buyer: Gains hands-on experience and supports with sourcing and purchasing goods and services under supervision.

Assistant Procurement Officer: Assists the sourcing and management of contracts, negotiates with suppliers, and ensures compliance with regulations.

Level 4:

Apprenticeships at level 4 would be expected to be in operational procurement roles / entry – middle level roles with some managerial responsibility. Apprentices would be expected to deliver procurement activity with some or little supervision.

The typical job roles expected of apprenticeships at Level 4:

Procurement Officer, Procurement Specialist, Supply Chain Analyst, Procurement Executive, Assistant Category management, Category Supply Chain Planner, Logistics Analyst

Example roles and descriptions at level 4:

Procurement Officer: Manages contracts, negotiates with suppliers, and ensures compliance with regulations.

Assistant Category Specialist /Manager: Assists the development of category plans in specific areas like IT, construction, or healthcare procurement. Often category experts and responsible for supporting the development of the category and strategies to develop the procurement strategies and market.

Senior Buyer: Manages the procurement of materials, goods, and services for the organisation, ensuring that you are optimising the cost, cash, quality and service. You'll drive added value through sourcing strategically, value engineering, innovation delivery and risk management.

Contract Manager: Managing high value contracts and adopt and manage best practice procurement processes throughout the organisation.

PROGRESSION

Progression routes into Level 3 Commercial, Procurement and Supply Apprenticeship:

The profession is seeking to attract individuals from all backgrounds with a desire to influence better commercial outcomes through best practice procurement and supply and contract management.

The Level 3 Commercial, Procurement and Supply apprenticeship is designed for individuals of all backgrounds, offering an accessible entry point into this exciting field. This flexible program caters to various sectors and organisational needs with no prior experience necessary.

Progression into the level 3 apprenticeship in Commercial, Procurement and Supply can come from the following:

- GCSEs, A Levels and alternative qualifications
- Welsh Baccalaureate
- Prior work experience

Progression from the Level 3 Commercial, Procurement and Supply Apprenticeship:

On completion of the Level 3 Commercial, Procurement Apprenticeship, successful apprentices may progress onto the Level 4 Commercial, Procurement Apprenticeship to continue their learning journey and obtain two quality level 4 qualifications. One globally recognised (Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply) and one developed bespoke by Welsh professionals with Open Awards to support delegates to achieve the right on the job experience for a long and fulfilling career.

Other apprenticeships may continue to work whilst studying for their professional qualifications - Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply.

Some apprentices may elect to continue their technical studies and embark upon job-specific professional qualifications.

Progression routes into the Level 4 Commercial, Procurement and Supply Apprenticeship:

The Level 4 apprenticeship is ideal for those with prior but limited experience in commercial. This may be individuals transitioning from other roles across sectors. The individual may be completely new to procurement and maybe operating at a more senior level.

Progression into the Level 4 Commercial, Procurement Apprenticeship could be directly from the Level 3 Commercial, Procurement Apprenticeship or other related vocational qualifications or apprenticeships. Direct entry from school could be from achieving A levels (equivalent), or Welsh Baccalaureate Qualifications.

Progression routes from the Level 4 Commercial, Procurement and Supply Apprenticeship:

On completion of the Level 4 Commercial, Procurement Apprenticeship, successful apprentices may continue to work whilst studying for their professional qualifications, Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply. A qualification that is often demanded by employers for mid-level procurement roles.

Some apprentices may elect to continue their technical studies and embark upon job-specific professional qualifications.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

It is important that apprenticeship Pathways are inclusive and can demonstrate an active approach to identifying and removing barriers to entry and progression. Pathways should advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those persons who do not as identified in the Equality Act 2010.

The protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act are age, disability, gender re-assignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity. Marriage and civil partnership is also included although only in respect of the requirement to eliminate discrimination in employment.

Training providers and employers MUST also comply with the other duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against in terms of entry to the industry based upon those nine protected characteristics.

EMPLOYMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS (ERR)

Employment Responsibilities and Rights (ERR) is no longer compulsory in apprenticeship frameworks. But it is recommended that all apprentices (especially the 16 years -18 year group) receive a company induction programme.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of the Training Provider and Employer to ensure that the requirements of this pathway are delivered in accordance with the Welsh Government Apprenticeships Guidance.

Additional best practice guidance has been provided to support employers.

Employers:

To Provide on-the-job training: Best practice includes aligning an apprentice to a mentor from within the organisation or from an alternative organisation, provision of direct supervision, and opportunities to practice and develop required skills and knowledge.

Allocate time for off-the-job training: Facilitate participation in classroom sessions, workshops, or online learning modules as per the training plan and support apprentice during their learning.

Review progress regularly: Conduct regular meetings with the apprentice and training provider to discuss progress, address challenges, and adjust the plan as needed.

Support portfolio creation: Support the apprentice in preparing their portfolio with evidence to support evidence of competence as per the framework requirements.

Further information may be obtained from:

Welsh Government

DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@gov.wales