



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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## **WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

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**TITLE**            **Implementation of the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022**

**DATE**            **5 March 2026**

**BY**                **Vikki Howells MS, Minister for Further and Higher Education**

I am pleased to inform members that I have this week made a suite of subordinate legislation in connection with the implementation of the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022 ('the 2022 Act') which address:

- the coming into force of the next phase of functions of the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research ('Medr'),
- amendments to existing legislation as a consequence of the 2022 Act, and
- the completion of the legislative framework for the regulatory regime for higher education providers in Wales.

The Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022 (Commencement No.7, Transitory, Transitional and Savings Provisions) Order 2026 ('the Order'), brings into force, on a series of dates between 1 April 2026 and 1 April 2027, provisions relating to:

- the registration, regulation, and quality assurance of tertiary education providers in Wales (Part 2 and Schedule 3),
- the inspection of further education and training by His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales ("Estyn") (Part 2),
- Medr's and the Welsh Ministers' functions in relation to the securing and funding of tertiary education (Part 3),
- the legislative framework in respect of approved Welsh apprenticeships (Part 4),
- learner complaints (Part 5),
- the provision of information, advice, and guidance by, and to, Medr (Part 6),
- the Welsh Ministers' order making powers in respect of instruments and articles of governance of higher education corporations (Part 7).

The Order also includes transitional provisions intended to ensure tertiary education providers in Wales are not subject to dual regulation whilst the 2022 Act is being

implemented, alongside saving provisions that preserve the validity of any orders made by the Welsh Ministers' under their intervention powers in section 57(4) of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 prior to the repeal of that provision.

Finally, the Order brings into force a number of provisions within Schedule 4 to the 2022 Act providing for consequential and minor amendments to existing legislation arising from the coming into force of the functions detailed above.

Alongside the Order I have also made the following regulations, each of which provide for amendments to existing legislation required as a consequence of the 2022 Act:

- The Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022 (Consequential Amendments and Transitory Provision) Regulations 2026 (*“the Consequential Regulations”*);
- The Online Safety Act 2023 (Exempt User-to-User and Search Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2026 (*“the Online Safety Regulations”*); and
- The Inspection of Education and Training (Wales) Regulations 2026 (*“the Inspection Regulations”*).

Following their approval by the Senedd this week, the Consequential Regulations make necessary changes to primary and secondary legislation to reflect the new statutory framework as provided for by the 2022 Act.

The Online Safety Regulations amend the Online Safety Act 2023 to reflect the new funding arrangements for further education and training in Wales as set out in the 2022 Act.

The Inspection Regulations revoke and replace the Inspection of Education and Training (Wales) Regulations 2001, aligning the inspection regime with the new role of Medr and its responsibilities under the 2022 Act. The Regulations maintain a six-year inspection cycle for further education and training and reduce the reporting period for Estyn from 70 to 35 working days, bringing it in line with school inspections. These changes ensure consistency, continuity, and a robust approach to quality assurance across the sector.

Last month I wrote to members confirming I had laid the Higher Education (Fee Limits) (Wales) Regulations 2026. Following their approval by the Senedd last week I am pleased to inform members I have also made these Regulations, as well as the Higher Education (Qualifying Courses and Qualifying Persons) (Wales) Regulations 2026.

These instruments complete the legislative framework for the new regulatory regime for higher education in Wales, with Medr taking forward the necessary activities to enable the establishment of the new register of providers of higher education on 31 July 2026.