



## north wales economic ambition board bwrdd uchelgais economaidd gogledd cymru

1. The Skills & Employment Workstream of the North Wales Economic Ambition Board welcome the opportunity to provide feedback via the consultation exercise and are supportive of the main aims outlined within the document.
2. North Wales is an economy based on considerable diversity in terms of the businesses it homes. Over 70% of businesses on average (almost 78% for example in Anglesey) employ less than 5 people, and therefore would request that a uniform approach not be adopted for a number of reasons (Capacity of workforce and additional costs within small and micro businesses being a considerable challenge)
3. North Wales is fortunate to house a considerable number of larger key employers, who would certainly be able to adhere to and accommodate the recommendations outlined in principle. However, as evidenced in brief above, with over two thirds of all businesses within North Wales employing less than 5 people, the larger employers are in the minority, and therefore their capacity to undertake and enact the proposals, would not reflect the larger economy of North Wales.
4. In addition to the variances with the North Wales economy regarding size of business outlined above, there are also other issues of disparity for consideration around the types of sectors involved (e.g. some are seasonal and therefore do not have a full compliment of staff employed on a year-round basis) .
5. A further variance for consideration is the difference in terms of geography. Firstly in terms of the clusters of businesses by size – with a concentration of smaller micro businesses in the North West , and the larger multi-nationals in the North East around Wrexham and Deeside. Secondly, in terms of the divide between those businesses between more affluent and deprived areas across the region, and if a consistent approach would disadvantage those businesses within the latter.
6. Whilst a common baseline of approach is welcomed, North Wales would benefit from an additional variance based on regionality and specialist sectoral acknowledgement. Could for example, smaller businesses within priority sectors be given preferential rates for consideration, to assist and maximise their output and labour supply development?
7. In addition to, and following on from the above, could smaller businesses who would potentially benefit as part of the wider supply chain to key strategic regional projects, also be supported from preferential rates for consideration to also assist and maximise their output and labour supply development?
8. There is a significant concern that should the differences noted above not be given due consideration, in addition to those already raised by regional partners within their own bespoke responses and submissions, then a 'blanket' approach, could significantly impact negatively, on the regions skills base, labour market, and future economic growth and development.