



Y Ganolfan
Dysgu Cymraeg
Genedlaethol —
National Centre
for Learning Welsh

THE FINANCIAL CONTINGENCY FUND POLICY



Dysgu
Learn



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Background

The National Centre for Learning Welsh was established on 1 August 2016 with the aim of providing strategic guidance to the field of Learning Welsh. The Centre provides grants to providers to deliver Welsh lessons across the whole of Wales. The providers are:

| Provider | Area |
|--|--|
| Learn Welsh Ceredigion-Powys-Carmarthenshire | Ceredigion, Powys and Carmarthenshire |
| Learn Welsh North West | Gwynedd, Anglesey, Conwy |
| Learn Welsh Cardiff | City of Cardiff |
| Learn Welsh Carmarthenshire | Carmarthenshire |
| Learn Welsh North East | Denbigh, Flintshire, Wrexham |
| Learn Welsh Gwent | Gwent |
| Learn Welsh Pembrokeshire | Pembrokeshire |
| Learn Welsh Swansea Bay Region | Swansea, Neath Port Talbot |
| Learn Welsh Glamorgan | Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil and Bridgend |
| Learn Welsh The Vale | Vale of Glamorgan |
| Learn Welsh Nant Gwrtheyrn | |

Purpose

The purpose of the The Financial Contingency Fund (Further Education) (Wales) Scheme 2023/24 is to provide financial support to those qualified students that might be prevented from accessing education by financial considerations, or who, for whatever reason, including a physical or other disability, face financial difficulties.

Financial Contingency Fund Further Education 2023/24 Guidance

The Fund will be used in accordance with the Regulations included in Appendix 1.

The Fund for Learning Welsh

The value of the fund, which has been confirmed for the 2023/24 academic year, is £22,000. The National Centre for Learning Welsh will receive the money from the Welsh Government and the Centre will be responsible for administering the money to the learners. Money is allocated to the Centre every term in the following way:

| Academic Year | Term | Total |
|---------------|--------|--------|
| 2023/24 | Term 1 | £8,800 |
| 2023/24 | Term 2 | £6,600 |
| 2023/24 | Term 3 | £6,600 |

Once the fund has come to an end, we will inform the Providers so that they are able to share the information with learners who are making enquiries.

The Role of the Providers

The main role of the Providers will be to promote the Fund and to encourage learners to submit applications. Every Provider is expected to promote the Fund in order to ensure fairness so that Learners from across Wales are given the same opportunity to utilise it.

Providers will inform every Learner of the Fund when they register / enrol in order to ensure inclusion and fairness for anyone considering submitting an application.

This will be done in the following ways:

- Including information about the Fund in the prospectus.
- Including information about the Fund when marketing courses, especially when targeting specific groups that could take advantage of the Fund, e.g. disadvantaged areas.
- Ensure that every tutor receives information and understands the purpose of the Fund.
- Refer to the Fund during the induction period for every Learner and provide information about how to submit an application.
- If an application is not complete and does not include all of the necessary evidence and correct details, payment cannot be guaranteed in line with the timetable below.
- Ensure that learners are able to discuss their needs or receive advice about the Fund from a relevant member of staff.

The work will be supervised by the YGDCG Directors, who will be responsible for the accountability of the Fund on behalf of the Welsh Government.

If an application is not complete and does not include all of the necessary evidence and correct details, payment cannot be guaranteed in line with the timetable below.

Providers will ensure that a member of staff is available to advise and provide information to any learner that wishes to discuss the Fund or that needs assistance to submit an application.

An information leaflet and application form is provided in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3. Providers should use these only, and the Centre is only able to accept applications from learners who have submitted this form.

The Role of the Centre

The National Centre for Learning Welsh will administer the Financial Contingency Fund on behalf of the Learning Welsh sector.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh will report regularly on the Fund's expenditure to the Welsh Government.

An audit of the expenditure will be included as part of the Centre's annual audit and will be included in the annual accounts.

Termly reports on the use of the Fund will be provided to the Providers in order to identify whether or not full use is being made of the Fund, or if there is any need for further promotion.

The Centre will hold regular discussions with the Providers about the use, or lack thereof, made by their learners of the Fund when assessing the number of applications received from every area.

Responsibilities

The Centre's Swyddog Trefnidaeth will be responsible for receiving applications from learners and for coordinating the awarding process.

The Executive Finance Officer will be the main contact for Providers that have any enquiries about the Grant.

The work will be supervised by the YGDCG Directors, who will be responsible for the accountability of the Fund on behalf of the Welsh Government.

Application Timetable

Applications will need to be submitted by the closing date, at the latest, and payments will be processed in accordance with guidance.

If an application is not complete and does not include all of the necessary evidence and correct details, payment cannot be guaranteed.

| Academic Year | Claim for the Period | Closing Date for Applications |
|---------------|--|-------------------------------|
| 2023/24 | Term 1 (September 2023 – December 2023) | 01.01.2024 |
| 2023/24 | Term 2 (January 2024 – March 2024) | 01.04.2024 |
| 2023/24 | Term 3 (April 2024 – July 2024) | 26.07.2024 |

Please note that only applications for Summer Schools should be sent at the end of August.

If an application is received for term-time lessons, the fund will not be able to repay the costs.

Awarding the Payments – Scoring Matrix

The Centre will adhere to a structure of assessing every application impartially and consistently across Wales. To this end, every application will be assessed against the scoring matrix.

The matrix will score against the type of support applied for, as well as the specific circumstances of the individuals.

Every application must meet the minimum basic requirements.

The Swyddog Trefniadaeth and Executive Finance Officer will be responsible for the initial assessment against the matrix scores, and will present the score and the recommendation to award money to the individual to YGDCG Directors, who will approve the awards.

There is no guarantee that learners will receive the entire amount that they have noted in their applications. The decision about the total amount of the payment will be made by in accordance with the following guidelines:

| | |
|---|---|
| Application for an amount up to (and including) £50 (in a term) | Full Payment |
| Application for an amount that exceeds £50 (in a term) | Part or full payment (dependent on the application) |

Processing the Payments

Payments are processed each term for learners, in accordance with the timetable noted in the Applications Timetable. The Centre will check with the Provider to ensure that the learner is continuing to attend lessons by providing a list of learners that receive funding each term. It is the provider's responsibility to inform the Centre if a learner decides to cease to attend the lessons.

Qualified Learners

In order to qualify, individuals must confirm that they meet the following core requirements:

| Situation | Evidence |
|---|--|
| Confirm that it would be difficult to access your studies without support from the Fund due to financial considerations being a barrier | Commitment on the application form |
| Is 16 years old, or older, on 31 August 2023 | Commitment on the application form (date of birth) |
| Be a settled, legal, UK resident for at least 3 years; or meet the conditions of residence in the Learner Eligibility Guide for post-16 funding (details in the Appendix 1) | Commitment on the application form |
| Registered for a Learning Welsh course with one of the National Centre for Learning Welsh providers | Registration Number and Confirmation from the Provider / Tutor |

Priority will be given to individuals in the following situations:

| Situation | Evidence |
|---|---|
| Parent with childcare needs | Commitment on the application form |
| Single parent with childcare needs | Commitment on the application form |
| A carer; have been in care, on probation or are otherwise considered at risk | Commitment on the application form |
| On low income, including learners who do not qualify for income support, or students from low-income families * | Commitment on the application form |
| Resident in an area with an overall ranking of 190 or less according to the 2014 Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation | Post code check against the Government's WIMD 2014 – Executive Finance Officer to check |
| Face particular financial difficulties because their families will cease to receive the children element of Universal Credit as of the 1st of September following their 19th birthday | Commitment on the application form |

*It is possible that the Centre will ask for evidence that you are on low income as a part of our audit process, however, there is no need to send the evidence as part of the claim. Learners must therefore ensure that they have evidence available if needed.

Valid Costs

The Centre will consider applications for the following costs:

| Application | Description | Evidence | Maximum Award |
|--|---|---|--|
| Childcare | Able to claim up to £5 an hour for up to 3.5 hours for the cost of childcare per lesson/session | Receipt from a CIW registered carer (including their registration number). Details of lessons / sessions dates. | £17.50 per child per lesson / session (3.5 hours x £5 an hour) |
| Examination Fee | Entry Level Examination Fee | Receipt from your provider confirming that you have paid (noting the total) | £20 |
| Examination Fee | Foundation Level Examination Fee | Receipt from your provider confirming that you have paid (noting the total) | £22 |
| Examination Fee | Intermediate Level Examination Fee | Receipt from your provider confirming that you have paid (noting the total) | £24 |
| Examination Fee | Higher Level Examination Fee | Receipt from your provider confirming that you have paid (noting the total) | £32 |
| Resources - Learning equipment / materials | Essential resources for the participation in class activities, such as books, digital devices, access to internet for virtual classes | Receipt(s) noting the item and costs | £200 in an academic year |
| Travel Costs - Car | £0.25 per mile to travel to a lesson / session (up to 60 miles per journey) | Fill in the travel costs form and include the dates and details of the journeys | £15 per journey (up to 60 miles x £0.25) |
| Travel Costs - Bus / Train | The cost of the journey to attend a lesson / session | Copies of the tickets | £15 per journey |
| Parking costs | Parking costs when attending a lesson / session | Copies of the parking tickets, including dates and totals | £5 per lesson / session |
| Disabilities | Up to £10 per lesson/ session to assist with additional costs due to disabilities | An official letter providing evidence | £10 per lesson / session |

The Fund cannot be used to repay the following costs:

- Course Fees
- Fines
- Costs that have not yet been paid
- Deposits
- Costs not supported by the correct evidence (noted in the above table)

Assessing Applications

The Centre will aim to assess and approve applications that are submitted regularly in order to ensure that the learners receive their awards and payments (if successful) without delay. The table below confirms the procedure that is followed:

| | Step | Timetable | Responsibility |
|---|---|---|--|
| 1 | Learner to submit his / her application to the Centre | By the closing date for the term noted in the Application Timetable | The learner |
| 2 | Scoring the Application | Within 10 working days of the closing date | Swyddog Trefniadaeth / Executive Finance Officer |
| 3 | Approving the Application | Within 15 working days of the closing date | YGDCG Director |
| 4 | Payment to the learner | Date noted in the Application Timetable | Executive Finance Officer |
| 5 | Feedback to unsuccessful learner | Within 20 working days of the closing date | Swyddog Trefniadaeth |
| 6 | Report on the awards | End of term | Swyddog Trefniadaeth / Executive Finance Officer |

Appeal Process

Learners can appeal against the decision in writing. Firstly, feedback is provided to them on the scoring matrix and the reason why they were not successful.

It is possible for learners to appeal the decisions by resubmitting their application, including additional information.

| | Step | Timetable | Responsibility |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Learner to submit his / her appeal to the Centre | Closing date is 15 working days after receiving unsuccessful feedback | The learner |
| 2 | Letter / e-mail of thanks for the application | Within 5 working days of the closing date | Swydddog Trefniadaeth |
| 3 | Re-scoring the Application | Within 10 working days of the closing date | Executive Finance Officer |
| 4 | Approving the Application | Within 15 working days of the closing date | YGDCG Director |
| 5 | Payment to the learner | Within 20 working days of the closing date | Executive Finance Officer |
| 6 | Feedback to unsuccessful learner | Within 20 working days of the closing date | Swydddog Trefniadaeth |
| 7 | Report on the awards | Following payment | Swydddog Trefniadaeth / Executive Finance Officer |

Further Appeals

If the learner fails a second time, he/she is able to write formally to the Centre's Chief Executive noting the basis of his/her appeal. This should be done within 10 days of receiving the second unsuccessful adjudication. The Chief Executive's decision will be final.

| | Step | Timetable | Responsibility |
|---|--|--|-----------------|
| 1 | The learner to submit a further appeal to the Centre | Closing date is 10 working days after receiving the second unsuccessful feedback | The learner |
| 2 | Assessment | Within 5 working days of the closing date | Chief Executive |
| 3 | Notification on the final appeal's adjudication | Within 5 working days of the closing date | Chief Executive |

Appendix 1 - Financial Contingency Fund Further Education 2023/24 Guidance

Appendix 2 – Information Leaflet

Appendix 3 - Ffurflen Gais / Claim Form