



Academi Genedlaethol ar gyfer  
Arweinyddiaeth Addysgol Cymru  
National Academy for  
Educational Leadership Wales

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# Endorsement of Leadership Development Provision – Guidance



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# Chief executive's introduction

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## I am pleased to present this booklet as guidance for the National Academy for Educational Leadership's Endorsement process.

One of our core purposes is to contribute to the development of the professional capabilities of current and aspiring leaders across the education system in Wales. We will do this by providing coherence and quality assurance for the range of educational leadership development opportunities available in Wales. This guidance forms part of that process.

We encourage all providers who develop and deliver leadership development opportunities to consider bringing their provision forward for endorsement. The endorsement process includes ambitious criteria which is set clearly in the context of Welsh policy and promotes equity of access to all leaders whichever setting or language they work in or wherever they are in Wales. We must continue to provide the best provision to support all our leaders.

We are also keen to encourage the development of new and innovative provision. Leadership development opportunities need to be flexible and in line with current reform and leaders themselves should contribute to the co-construction of leadership provision. As the OECD states in its recommendations to the Welsh Government: *Invest in the development of education professionals' capacity to be the main drivers of the curriculum in schools by enhancing their skills and competencies and promoting their collaboration.* (2020)

So, if you have current provision which is demonstrating impact, bring it forward for endorsement and if you have some great ideas about entrepreneurial leadership then share those ideas with us and let's see how we can support you through our innovation pathway. Please contact the Leadership Academy if you would like further information about Endorsement or Innovation.

**Tegwen Ellis**  
Chief Executive

# Our vision

The National Academy for Educational Leadership (Leadership Academy) will work in partnership with practitioners and policymakers from across the Welsh education system to create the conditions in which educational leadership will thrive. By 2025, the organisation will make a key contribution to a Welsh education system in which:



By creating the conditions needed to inspire leaders, the Leadership Academy will enrich the lives of children and young people across Wales, helping them develop as ambitious, capable learners; as healthy, confident individuals; as enterprising, creative contributors; and as ethical, informed citizens.

# Our values

All staff of the Leadership Academy, its Board members, secondees and Associates, are committed to working in ways that are consistent with the seven principles of public life, namely: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership

The work of the Leadership Academy is also informed by our commitment to being:



# Leadership development

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## PROVISION

The Leadership Academy is taking a broad view of leadership development provision and will be seeking to endorse both programmes and those leadership development opportunities that are not necessarily programmatic in nature but may be bespoke and local.

It is seeking to endorse a wide range of current provision that will be relevant for leaders at various career stages, with various needs and working within specific and diverse contexts in Wales. Above all, the Leadership Academy will be looking to ensure that the provision is underpinned by international evidence of what makes effective leadership. As a result, all leaders can be confident that the leadership development they invest their time in will have a positive impact on outcomes for children and young people.

## PROVIDER

We use the term ‘provider’ to cover those who are responsible for the delivery of leadership development programmes, and for those leading other leadership development opportunities. This can include schools working together in partnerships or alliances.

The Leadership Academy will not be directly responsible for delivering any leadership development provision. An audit of provision across Wales identified some excellent practice, but also areas where there are gaps. It will commission new provision where there are specific requirements, sectors or locations where the needs of leaders are not yet being fully met. Endorsement is of provision not providers – providers can submit more than one programme for endorsement at a time within the leadership area specified by the Leadership Academy.



# Endorsement

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## WHY ENDORSE?

The purpose of endorsement is to ensure that the most effective leadership development provision currently on offer can be recognised. This provision will have met a set of quality criteria (see pages 8-11). This will help the Leadership Academy fulfil its role to inspire and develop the current and next generation of leaders to respond to the unique challenges and opportunities of educational leadership in Wales.

The aim of endorsement is to ensure equity of access to high quality leadership development provision across Wales, and to ensure that the provision meets the ambition of our National Mission Action Plan 2017-2021 and supports its 4 key enabling objectives through:

- The vision, values and principles of the Leadership Academy
- Developing all Schools as Learning Organisations (SLO) in line with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) principles
- The National Approach to Professional Learning
- Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership
- Curriculum for Wales

For provision to support leaders in other educational settings please contact the Leadership Academy for further information.

The benefits of endorsement for providers will include an opportunity to market provision through the Leadership Academy. It will also allow provision to carry a mark of quality assurance which will support marketing and communication with leaders.

Leaders will continue to exercise a choice as to which leadership development is right for them and will be able to take into account whether or not the provision they are considering has received Leadership Academy endorsement.

The Leadership Academy quality criteria include a requirement to engage serving leaders in the design, development and facilitation of provision. Whilst co-construction is a developing feature of much of the provision currently available in Wales, it will also provide more consistent opportunities for leaders to be engaged in all aspects of leadership development.



## CRITERIA

The four areas are:



### 1

#### THE WELSH POLICY CONTEXT

The provision will need to demonstrate how it supports leaders in schools in realising the ambition of Our National Mission Action Plan 2017-2021 through:

- 1.1 The vision and values of the National Academy for Educational Leadership
- 1.2 Developing Schools as Learning Organisations in line with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) principles
- 1.3 The National Approach to Professional Learning
- 1.4 The Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership
- 1.5 Curriculum for Wales

## DELIVERY AND LEARNING MODEL

The delivery and learning model will need to demonstrate how it draws on the best local, national and international practice and addresses the specific needs of leaders in Wales, fully reflecting the national reform agenda. The application statement will evidence that the providers' model:

- 2.1 Is led by high-quality personnel; facilitators, coaches, mentors appropriate to the target audience
- 2.2 Draws on excellent local/regional practice, with leaders and settings recruited as appropriate e.g. facilitators, mentors, coaches
- 2.3 Is partnership based and promotes joint ownership
- 2.4 Draws on a broad evidence base of effective leadership including reflecting the practice of highly effective Welsh leaders
- 2.5 Is sufficiently contextualised to reflect the characteristics of the sector/s being targeted
- 2.6 Reflects learning needs at the specific stage of leadership development being targeted
- 2.7 Allows opportunities for leaders of educational settings to build networks and collaborate with peers, including e.g. on joint areas of improvement and innovation
- 2.8 Contains work-based learning components that address real issues and improve outcomes showing participants contributing back to the system
- 2.9 Is based on a learning model that enables a cycle of enquiry, action research and reflection
- 2.10 Makes appropriate use of blended learning approaches
- 2.11 Encourages opportunities for reflection through the use of the Professional Learning Passport (PLP)
- 2.12 Has a clear role for higher education institutes (HEIs) and provides the opportunity for leaders of educational settings and partner organisations to engage in action research and to connect this with other opportunities for research-engaged practice
- 2.13 Offers opportunities for accreditation where appropriate (it is important to note that the Leadership Academy endorses leadership development opportunities and not any qualification which may be achieved as a result)

## 3

### PROCESS (INCLUDING MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION)

The management and administration of the provision are essential to ensuring participants access and benefit from the leadership development opportunity as efficiently and effectively as possible. The application statement will evidence that the providers' processes:

- 3.1 Offer accurate, clear marketing of provision specifying learning outcomes and selection criteria, with a clear customer care policy
- 3.2 Provide efficient and effective administrative systems to support delivery
- 3.3 Collect evidence and feedback to ensure continuous quality improvement
- 3.4 Ensure open and appropriate access geographically for target beneficiaries
- 3.5 Make appropriate use of technology to reduce cost and travel demands on participants
- 3.6 Provide open and appropriate linguistic access for target beneficiaries, ensuring Welsh language provision is developed specifically for that sector and is offered in Welsh and English as appropriate to context
- 3.7 Show an understanding of the diverse range of educational settings in Wales in ensuring equity of access
- 3.8 Ensure quality assurance processes/procedures are rigorous and robust

## 4

### EVALUATION AND IMPACT

Evaluation and impact are crucial components of the provision in demonstrating to the Leadership Academy and to participants its positive impact on the system as a whole and, in particular, on outcomes for children and young people. The application will evidence that the evaluation and impact strategies, methods and measurements show:

- 4.1 The provision inspires and motivates the current and next generation of leaders at all levels of their career and meets a diverse range of needs
- 4.2 Improved leadership practice leading to better outcomes for children and young people
- 4.3 The provision has a clear process to ensure the programme leaders' skills and knowledge are of high quality
- 4.4 That the provision is deemed to be of value for money e.g. time spent on the provision by the participants and its impact
- 4.5 The provision is sustainable beyond the specific delivery of the provision e.g. through ongoing networking opportunities, alumni events
- 4.6 Quality assurance outcomes form part of an ongoing improvement cycle

# Evidence

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A proforma for the submission of evidence is available electronically on the Leadership Academy website ([www.nael.cymru](http://www.nael.cymru)).

## PART 1

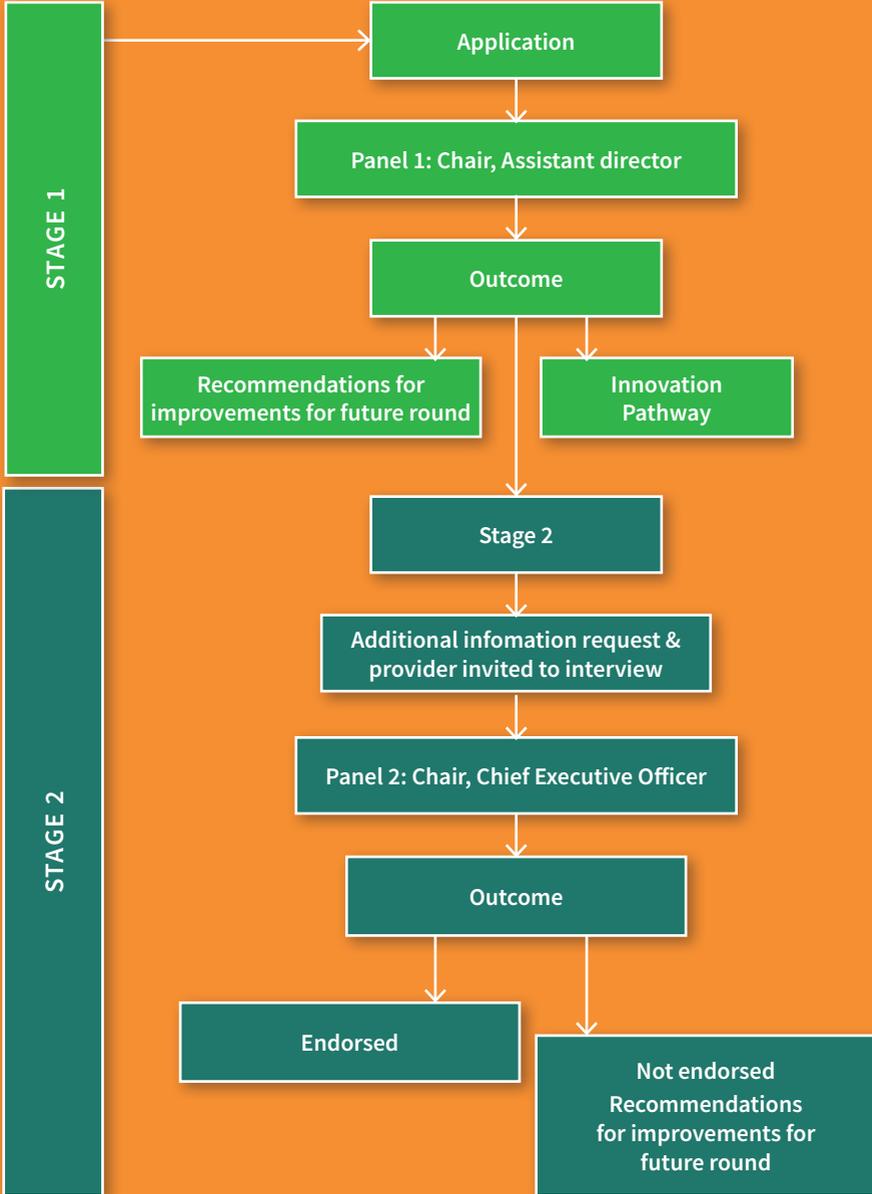
- (i) Provide a brief overview of the provider detailing experience and track record in no more than 500 words
- (ii) Provide a brief overview of the provision, its aims, objectives and learning objectives in no more than 500 words
- (iii) State career and leadership developmental stage/focus being targeted. If you're seeking endorsement for more than one leadership development stage/focus you will need to submit separate applications

## PART 2

- (i) Providers are requested to write a statement of no more than 1000 words for each area outlining how they meet the criteria. Where providers use the criteria as sub-headings in their statement these sub-headings will not form part of the word count. The statement may reference or signpost additional policies and documentation. Please note, the documentation should not be submitted with your initial application but may be requested as additional evidence for stage 2.
- (ii) If providers are working together in partnerships or alliances at regional or national level, then a group submission can be made for endorsement. If this is the case, then the application will need to demonstrate evidence of strong governance of the partnership or alliance and a robust approach to the management of risk.
- (iii) The proposal will also need to include evidence showing how each individual provider meets the criteria required, particularly in relation to delivery and that they are able to reflect the specific needs of leaders within the area they are intending to deliver in. If the application is successful and the provision is endorsed, then the annual Quality Assurance process will be conducted at a single provider level.

# The endorsement process

Endorsement will follow a 2-stage process:



## Stage 1

Assessment of the written submission will be undertaken by a panel chaired by the Assistant Director of the Leadership Academy responsible for leadership development & quality assurance. If the application is successful it will progress directly to the Endorsement Panel. If it is felt that the provision does not reach a minimum level in meeting the criteria and in particular does not reflect the vision and principles of the Leadership Academy, or meets the Welsh Policy context, the application will not go forward to stage 2.

## Stage 2

Endorsement Panel meeting: this will be an opportunity for the provider to meet with the Endorsement Panel. Following the written submission at stage 1 the provider will be asked to submit further evidence prior to the endorsement panel. The Panel will be chaired by the Leadership Academy Chief Executive. It will be an opportunity for further discussion of the provision including a short presentation by the provider.

## Who are the panel members?

The Leadership Academy will draw the panel from the Leadership Academy Associates, Stakeholder Group members and the Leadership Academy staff who will have received training in applying the Leadership Academy quality criteria.

## What support will be available?

The criteria and guidance documentation will be available on the Leadership Academy website [www.nael.cymru](http://www.nael.cymru) together with a list of any FAQs that will be updated as the process gets underway.

### What happens once provision is endorsed?

Successful applications will be published on the Leadership Academy's website and communicated through social media. The Leadership Academy will inform Welsh Government of the outcomes of successful endorsement.

The provider should carry out ongoing self-evaluation of the quality and impact of their provision and provide the Leadership Academy with an annual quality assurance report as part of the annual review. Endorsement will be for 5 years and will need renewing after that. However, the Leadership Academy reserves the right to temporarily pause or rescind endorsement as a result of the annual review or if there is sufficient cause.

Throughout this time, the Leadership Academy will continue to work with providers who have had provision endorsed to ensure that the provision is fully reflective of changing contexts, remains wholly accessible and is able to continue to develop through innovation and ongoing review.

### What happens if the provision is not endorsed?

There will be no appeals process but there will be an opportunity to resubmit. The panel will give the provider guidance on any further evidence which needs to be in place prior to resubmission. Depending on the extent of this, the panel will also decide on the process of resubmission. If the provision is new and unable at this stage to demonstrate impact, the Innovation Pathway may be more suitable (see page 15).

### How will the process itself maintain credibility?

The endorsement process itself will be quality assured on an annual basis. The Leadership Academy has a working partnership with Education Scotland and the Centre for School Leadership in Ireland, whereby peer review of each other's endorsement process will be undertaken focused on identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

### Application process

Applications will be submitted via email to [post@agaa.cymru](mailto:post@agaa.cymru) and submission deadline dates will be available on the website. There will be no charge to cover the administration of endorsement, but the Leadership Academy will keep this under review and reserves the right to levy a small administration charge for organisations that are not public sector or charitable.

## Innovation and new provision

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The Leadership Academy is also seeking interest from providers who are being creative and innovative in their approaches to educational leadership development. The Leadership Academy will consider supporting providers financially in the development of provision which is 'new' and so may not yet be able to fully demonstrate impact.

Such 'new' provision can be in any field of educational leadership development and in any sector but will need to meet the criteria set out in areas 1-3 of the endorsement criteria (as set out in pages 8-11). The provision will also need to demonstrate how, over time, and through the developmental stages, it will gather the evidence required to address the impact criteria set out in area 4 and ensure sustainability beyond the initial funding period.

Please contact the Leadership Academy for further information regarding funding and to discuss your ideas, email [post@agaa.cymru](mailto:post@agaa.cymru)





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