

Activity completed	Termly Apprenticeship Quality Network catchup (Medr and ACT)
Attendees	Cliona O’Neil, Bethan Milton, Hannah Reilly, Becky Morris
Date	29/01/2026

Narrative

Learner Engagement Code

- HR attended the meeting to request support with proposed changes to the Learner Engagement Code following the recent consultation.
- HR explained that the timing is appropriate and that feedback is required **by 20 February 2026**.
- **Action:** BM to confirm the best approach for providing feedback.

Completed – feedback has been requested from Apprenticeship providers.

Updates from Cliona and Bethan – ongoing key projects

1. Review of performance indicators

- A review of performance indicators will begin in the autumn, predominantly led by the statistics team.
- Representation from Apprenticeship providers can be included in these review activities.
- The review will cover benchmark indicators to be used going forward, the scope and level of data published, and levels of transparency.

2. Working guidance documents

- Guidance documents for Local Authorities have been completed, reflecting their slightly different responsibilities under the Code.
- Discussions with other training providers (e.g., Educ8) have included mapping Code pillars to clarify what evidence will be required under the new guidance.
- There was discussion on producing simplified 1–2 page guidance summaries to support provider understanding.
- Agreement reached that this would be beneficial.
- Medr will share draft documents relating to apprenticeships as they become available for provider feedback.

3. Data Analysis and Information Sharing

- Medr outlined future plans to undertake analysis of data and information at a provider level. BM queried whether this analysis would be shared with Estyn for inspection purposes.
- There was wider discussion about information sharing and the need to avoid duplication of effort.
- Cliona confirmed that Medr currently has no plans to share provider-level analysis with Estyn, although some information is shared.
- The group discussed the benefits of improved sharing arrangements, including reducing misinterpretation of data, aligning priorities, and supporting clearer communication.

Headline overview – updates to guidance

Cliona provided an overview of changes in the following areas, including, but not limited to:

Learner Protection Plans

Including scenarios such as employer collapse, mergers, or organisational closures.

Quality Framework

- Simplification of references to learner engagement
- Broader focus within teaching and learning sections

Narrative

- Greater clarity around data use and terminology

Additional updates from Medr

- Medr is considering whether a minimal level of compliance is required but is conscious of avoiding an overly regulatory approach. They are keen to utilise the Annual Assurance Return to support this.
- Consideration is being given to the use of cyclical testing every 3 - 5 years, focusing on key themes within the framework.
- The team aims to limit requests for providers to create or submit additional evidence wherever possible.
- Plans to request headline/summary information from providers regarding Self-Evaluation have been paused and will be reconsidered later in the year.
- Work on developing a Continuous Improvement 'theme' has been delayed for another year, although Medr remains interested in working with the sector to identify emerging themes. Cliona hopes to access Strategic Support Fund to support this.
- The use of information from the Annual Assurance Return to identify network-wide themes was also discussed.

National Comparators (NC)

- BM asked about publication timelines for National Comparators.
- Cliona confirmed that the Learner Outcomes Report (LOR) will be published in March in its usual format for this year.
- Changes are expected following the consultation.
- Further consideration is being given to whether the scope of NCs/data sharing could be expanded across the wider UK to enable UK-wide benchmarking. Cliona will provide more details as work progresses.

Sector engagement

- BM advised that a vice-chair has been appointed for the Wales Apprenticeship Quality meetings, and further meetings will be arranged going forwards.
- BM expressed interest in having Medr representation at future meetings to enable direct discussion of proposed changes with the Network.
- Cliona and Bethan confirmed that Medr is willing to fund these meetings, as well as the joint meeting with Degree Apprenticeships next year.