

Master Craftsperson Qualification: Considerations for its adoption in Wales

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It was undertaken as part of ColegauCymru / CollegesWales's role as Wales' National Contact Point (NCP) for a range of European initiatives that facilitate transparency of learning frameworks and that support the mobility of learners and educators across European nations.

ColegauCymru / CollegesWales has been working on behalf of the Welsh Government as the Wales NCP since 2013. Its programme of work includes:

- Acting as National Coordination Point for the **European Qualification Framework** (EQF). The EQF aims to relate the national qualifications systems in different European countries to a common European reference framework.
- Acting as National Coordination Point for the **European Credit Transfer System for Vocational Education and Training** (ECVET). ECVET aims to use a common language and structure to promote mutual trust among providers of vocational education & training and competent institutions across Europe.
- Acting as National Reference Point and to raise awareness within the Quality Network of **European Quality Assurance System for Vocational Education and Training** (EQAVET).
- Developing policy in line with **Validation of Informal and Non-Formal Learning** (VIL) which is regarded key to lifelong learning and social inclusion.

The aims of these EU programmes vis-a-vis learners in Wales are to:

- promote greater transparency and recognition of learning
- make achievements visible and understandable
- provide more information on jobs and the knowledge/skills required
- ensure that the vocational education and training programmes are quality assured.

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Introduction

This paper aims to set out the suggested research that will be necessary to identify whether there is a desire for creating a Master Craftsperson qualification route in Wales and to consider the viability of such a route. The aim of this research document is to return, within the next few months, the answers to the questions set out about the viability and potential uptake of the Master Craftsperson programmes in Wales. This paper will look at the proposal for introducing the Master Craftsperson framework to the following sectors, in the first instance:

- Business Management and Administration
- Construction
- Engineering
- Finance
- Health and Social Care
- Hospitality and Tourism

The spur for this work was a seminar in Berlin at the end of 2015, that brought European nations together to consider the question of how to formally recognise masters of crafts, trades and professions. The seminar was a Peer Learning Activity organised through the European Commission that was tasked with examining the status and different educational levels attributed to Master Craftsperson qualifications in different European countries. ColegauCymru was invited to participate in the seminar in its capacity of Wales' National Contact Point for the European Qualifications Framework – a role that it undertakes on behalf of the Welsh Government.

European Landscape

The Master Craftsman title has been used in Europe since medieval times. Earning this title during this period, involved a similar process as it does to attain the European Master Craftsperson title today. Starting with the candidate serving a formal apprenticeship to a Master, moving through a Journeyman period to gain experience and finally an assessment and step up to Master Craftsman. So where is Europe now with Master Craftsperson?

There is currently a significant take up of the Master Craftsperson framework in European countries driven by legislation or demand from employers and customers. For example; in Germany, where there is a legal framework around the requirement to obtain the Master Craftsperson designation for employers and leaders, in 2010/11, 93,357 people obtained the qualification. Switzerland has a similar legal framework and, in 2009, 14,852 people qualified and Austria trained 3,536 in 2010/11.

In a recent study by the International Centre for Guidance Studies and Pearson UK, the role of the Master Craftsperson in the delivery of apprenticeship training was researched. The study concluded that the difference between apprenticeships and world class apprenticeships is directly linked to the level of expertise of the trainer/mentor in the company. It was found that if the in house training is delivered by a 'Master' then the apprenticeship would reach world class status. This would indicate that to increase our technical expertise and to compete in the wider world market, Wales needs to fundamentally change who passes on the workplace skills to the future generation.

There is some commonality, across Europe, in the sectors that can undertake the various the Master Craftsperson frameworks. Of the five countries researched (Austria, France, Germany, Norway and Slovenia), all include engineering, manufacturing and construction as Master Craftsperson routes as well as some of the traditional craft and handicraft routes; such as Florist, Instrument Maker and Baker. Some of the countries have opened up newer, non-traditional routes within their structures; such as Insurance and Business Consultancy, Funeral Director and Provision of Personnel. Norway have created a sector list that contains the traditional and newer routes. For instance, crafts under the title of Aesthetics; such as Hairdresser, Knitter etc. (see Appendix 1 for full lists per country). There is a noticeable gap around the service sectors for available Master Craftsperson regulated accreditation.

Within Europe, there is a non-formal use for the Master Craftsperson designation that has no external validity for accreditation. This designation can be used to control access to the title and the perceived link to quality and expertise by a company or individual.

UK Landscape

The current use of the title Master Craftsperson/man is varied and different across the sectors, in the UK, who have adopted the title for general use. There are a number of organisations in the UK who are currently issuing Master or Master Craftsperson designations to either individuals or companies who are willing to meet the entry requirements and pay the relevant fees.

Within the UK, there does currently exist a Guild of Master Craftsmen, who strive to provide consumers with a list of trade professionals who have met their minimum qualification standards. They don't provide a framework for attainment just a minimum standard.

The Tile Association have a Master Craftsman award that can be applied for. There are very strict guidelines for achievement that set out a minimum standard for applicants. These include a level three qualification or a three-year apprenticeship and 15 years' experience. This experience period is significantly higher than the current European requirement for Master Craftsperson.

The Construction sector is represented by the Federation of Master Builders, who promote quality within the industry but who have no formal qualification requirements. Although the designation of Master Craftsperson isn't used; the fact the individuals or companies join a Master Builders Federation, could cause confusion within the sector and with consumers.

The Hair Council accredit applicants as Master Craftsman, if you opt to register with them and accept state registration for a minimum of two years. The Hair Council ask for a level 3 qualification or evidence of completion of a training period. The applicant has to have progressed into a management or teaching role for either one or two years.

As can be seen from just this small snapshot of Master Craftsperson accreditors, the requirements for awarding the title are varied and can be regulated or non-regulated. If Wales is to develop the Master Craftsperson designation, should it follow Europe's framework, one of the existing organisations guidelines or develop Wales' own?

What is a European Master Craftsperson?

Research has shown that in each of the countries that have adopted a legal framework for the accreditation of Master Craftsperson, the following areas of competence must be proven; sector specific occupational competence (knowledge, understanding and vocational skills), management (HR, finance, economics, etc.), skills transfer (coaching, mentoring, teaching etc.) and a provable minimum period of experience, post qualification, within the required role.

Does Wales need Master Craftspersons in the workforce?

If this Framework is to be adopted, there are a number of questions that need to be addressed. For instance, would Wales benefit from the introduction of the Master Craftsperson framework? As this is the first time this formal framework has been suggested for Wales, there is currently no available research to answer this question. So, would adopting the framework give Welsh tradespersons parity with their European colleagues? The frameworks in Europe differ in some ways but importantly can accommodate different vocational qualification levels. Would there be consumer or supply chain demand for companies that employ or have staff who have reached

the Master Craftsperson designation? Would the development of Master Craftsperson increase the attractiveness of Wales as a location for business in Europe? For instance, the accepted image of Germany is as the leader of Engineering development and production in Europe. Could Wales gain a similar level of recognition? The research questions for this area are simple:

1. Does Wales want Master Craftsperson qualifications?
2. Will it increase Wales' saleability?
3. Would Welsh Master Craftsperson qualifications need parity with Europe?
4. Could it increase consumer and employer belief in the trades in Wales?

What's in a Name

The Europe-wide adopted name for this framework designation is *Master Craftsperson*. This designation was adopted in part because of the historical nature of the title and its universal meaning to all in Europe. Is this a title that Wales would want to adopt or are there alternatives?

Pros

- Europe wide legal adoption for this designation
- Already has a universally understood meaning as 'a leader in their trade'
- Can cover a wide range of sectors and still have currency

Cons

- Could be seen as an Engineering/construction only designation – not transferable
- Would Wales be following and not leading?
- Would potential candidates be reluctant to adopt a European legally recognised title, in the current unstable European climate?
- In the UK some trade bodies already issue Master Craftsman/Craftsperson designations.

What are the alternatives?

Some suggestions:

English	Welsh
Craft Master	Meistr Crefft / Crefft Feistr
Expert Craftsperson (non-gendered term)	Crefftwr Arbenigol
Lead Craftsperson	Prif Grefftwr

Master Tradesperson

Meistr Crefft / Crefft Feistr / Meistr
Masnach / Masnach Feistr

Master Craftsman (gender specific)

Meistr Crefft / Crefft Feistr

It would be useful to consult Welsh businesses to see whether there are any other titles that might be applicable. Might there be an alternative that could be marketed and developed to reach the same universal recognition level as Master Craftsman?

The research questions that require an answer for the name of the proposed framework:

1. Does the framework adopt the Europe wide designation of Master Craftsperson?
2. Is there demand for an alternative designation, such as Craft Master? If so, what is it?

The Employer Element

For the Master Craftsperson designation to become part of the employment landscape in Wales, it will need to have the support of both employer and employee.

In Europe, the designation has attained national recognition, and represents the quality standard needed to be an advanced Craftsperson in the sector and has created demand from both employers and employees. In Germany, it was until recently a legal requirement for any individual wishing to own a business to be a Master Craftsperson. This legal requirement contributed to the strong take-up in Germany. However, as this framework would be voluntary in Wales, would there be a demand? This leads to a further set of research questions. These are:

1. Would the creation of Master Craftspersons add value for businesses?
2. Would employers recognise the designation and promote its attainment?
3. Would employers understand the standards that must be met to attain it?
4. Would employers actively recruit people who have attained Master Craftsperson status?
5. Would employers reward people who have attained this status with more authority and higher wages?
6. Would employers be willing to contribute to the training costs of an employee? This could be with time, support, lost earnings and/or direct training cost contributions?

The Applicant Element

As well as the support from employers in the sector, if the Master Craftsperson framework were to work in Wales, the employees in the sector would need to support and undertake the accreditation process. The applicants would ultimately drive the framework to success or failure. The suggested research in this area should include the following questions:

1. What would the value of this designation be to individuals?
2. Would individuals commit to completing and attaining the Master Craftsman accreditation?
3. Do employees in the sector think the Master Craftsperson title would aid their career?
4. How long would they commit to studying for and completing the framework requirements for accreditation?
5. Would employees pay towards the accreditation process?
6. Would employees be able to use the currently available funding mechanisms to help them attain the needed qualifications if it involved undertaking a Higher Apprenticeship?

Funding

Within the European processes, there are a number of different funding routes available to complete the Master Craftsperson process. There are self-funding routes, the costs of which vary from €125 per unit to €1000s per unit, for the training and accreditation process. An example of this cost is the Slovenian model, where the cost for the Master Craftsperson exam ranges from €1287.99 to €1631.25. There are also options around grant funding and fully funding through government schemes. France however, has no structured grant or funding system.

As it could be argued that the lack of an accredited higher level qualification is a structural deficiency in the economy, what support could be given to the introduction of the role via European Structural Funds?

In Wales, would the addition of part or full government funding increase the potential take up of the framework? Or should all participants be responsible for the costs? To understand the potential effect funding could have on the uptake of this framework, the following research questions should be considered:

1. Should the government fund the training necessary for the candidates to complete the Master Craftsperson framework?
2. Should any potential funding cover part or all of the costs?
3. Should the funding be linked to employer size?

4. Should it be self-funding, either through a credit arrangement or learner direct funding?
5. Should the funding options use a combination of sources?

The Pilot Sectors

The six pilot sectors that have been proposed for Master Craftsperson research have been selected for a variety of reasons. Engineering, Construction and Hospitality and Catering have been proposed due to their links to the traditional Master Craftsperson routes and due to their inclusion in the available research of European frameworks. The Business and Finance routes have been chosen because of the growth in employment opportunities, in Wales, due to the growth of the Cardiff Enterprise zone. Health and Social Care has been selected because of its relevance in an ageing population and this industry, in 2014, was recorded as the largest employer of the pilot industries.

Business Management and Administration

Business Management and Administration sits within every sector represented within the Welsh workforce. The Sector Skills Alliance (SSA) completed research into the important skills needed in the Welsh Workforce. One of these was found to be Leadership and Management skills which was also identified as one of the three most important skills priorities for the future in the sector. The SSA, in their research across all the employment sectors in Wales, identified 60 individual management skills that employers viewed as critical.

This need has been reflected in research by both the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Welsh Government. The FSB highlight that the lack of management skills in Welsh businesses is damaging Wales Plc.

This paper will seek to explore if the proposed framework will assist in developing managers in this area and setting an industry standard for business leadership and management. This research will also need to explore if a separate framework for managers is needed, or if a management section within each framework will suffice.

When completing the research phase of this project, the two different options will need to be discussed and information sought about the applicability of the proposed frameworks highlighted in Table 1 and 2 or if both frameworks should be adopted.

Construction

The construction industry in Wales plays a vital role in delivering a vibrant economy and a quality environment. With investment for the sector estimated at more than £2.3 billion per annum; the sector accounts for around 10% of GDP. There are in excess of 12,000 companies involved within the sector, employing more than 100,000 people, including professionals such as planners, architects, surveyors and building engineers as well as the traditional construction companies responsible for 'new build', maintenance and upkeep of our historic and heritage buildings.

The industry lead body, CITB, have identified a number of objectives for the industry that could be supported by the introduction of the Master Craftsperson framework. Specifically highlighted is the need to assist trade qualified employees to make the transition to management and ownership. This is also linked to the need for level 4 craft skills and the development of the coaching and training ability of staff. This need will be reflected in the framework proposal. When researching the proposal within this sector the level 4 (table 1) and level 3 (table 3) proposed framework options will be discussed. There is sufficient feedback within the sector presently, that highlights a potential issue with attainment of the level 4 professional strands of the proposed framework. This could hinder Table 1 framework adoption.

Engineering

Advanced Materials and Manufacturing in Wales is responsible for over £38.6bn a year of national turnover. The various sectors within Advanced Materials and Manufacturing employ a 150,000-strong skilled workforce in Wales. Welsh Government have created four designated Enterprise Zones to continue to foster advanced materials and manufacturing excellence across the country.

There are three main sectors within Engineering in Wales; these sectors are Aviation, Automotive and Photonics. The Aviation Industry in Wales has approx. 20,000 employees across a range of employers. British Airways, Marshall Aviation Services and Airbus to name a few. The Automotive Industry turns over £3bn a year and employs 15,000 people in companies of all size and types. These range from manufacture to R&D. The Photonics Industry has grown significantly in Wales to a turnover of £2.5bn and the number of employees in the sector is predicted to grow by 200-300%.

The SSA in conjunction with SEMTA have identified two areas for development within the Engineering sector. These are advanced technical skills and management/leadership skills development. The proposed framework for this sector must reflect this identified need.

There are currently two Engineering Apprenticeship Frameworks in Wales at level 3 and 4. At level 4, the engineering framework is titled as the Advanced Manufacturing Engineering. Within this framework there are 10 Pathways – that cover the main sector routes decided on by the Sector Skills Council (SSC). Could this level 4 framework provide a recognised route to gain the knowledge and competence strands for potential Master Craftsperson candidates? The Level 3 framework in Engineering contain 12 Pathways in total and could be a feeder for a level 3 Master Craftsperson framework.

Finance

The Financial and Professional Services sector is currently the fastest growing in Wales, and already employs over 135,000 talented individuals. It is predicted that this level will increase to 200,000 by 2021. Currently home-grown businesses compete alongside major firms such as Admiral Group, HBOS Cards Services, HSBC, Legal & General, Lloyds banking group, Principality Ltd and RBS – while Wales is the European centre for internet-based, mass market distribution models (aggregator sites) with residents confused.com, gocompare.com and moneysupermarket.com sharing 70% of the UK market.

To continue the development of this sector in Wales, the SSA and the relevant lead SSCs have identified a range of skills that will be needed to create the future predicted growth, in the Financial Sector and its Welsh workforce. These skills focus around Leadership, Management and Commercial Acumen. The proposed framework must reflect these identified needs, if it is to be a successful measure of employee ability, in Wales and wider Europe. When completing this research; the outlined framework in Table 1 and 2 will be the main focus for this sector's Master Craftsperson offer.

Health and Social Care

This is a growing sector in the Welsh employment landscape. The Welsh Government have identified that this sector will continue to grow in the coming years as the population ages. Currently there are approx. 100,000 employees in the health sector in Wales split between public and private sector employers. It is thought that the Social Care sector employs a similar number in Wales as well. This makes the Health and Social Care sector one of the biggest in Wales.

The SSC for this sector has identified a number of requirements if it is to respond to the growing demands on its employers and employees. The first is the development of management ability in the sector and finally, the third is high level professional skills. The proposed framework must address each of these areas if it is to be successfully

adopted. When researching the proposed frameworks for this sector, all three suggested frameworks (Tables 1, 2 and 3) will be explored for suitability and uptake.

Hospitality and Catering

Wales is quickly becoming a driving force in this sector, in the UK, for its Food and Drinks skills and expertise, with 170,000 people contributing to gross sales of £17.3bn – and three dedicated Food Technology Centres. Food sector companies already resident in Wales include Burtons, Cadbury, Finsbury Foods, Kellogg, Lactalis/Nestle, Premier Foods, Spadel and Unilever. From development lab to factory floor to boardroom, you can expect a skilled, professional workforce right across primary production, manufacturing, retail, hospitality and wholesale.

The SSC, People 1st Cymru, have identified that the sector needs to develop new higher level qualifications for sector professionals, within Higher Apprenticeship frameworks, and to continue to develop leadership and management skills in the sector. The proposed framework must reflect this sector need if it is to be adopted. The research in this sector will focus on the proposed frameworks in Tables 1 and 3. The current uptake of the Higher Apprenticeships in this sector is very poor. This could show that Table 3 may be the preferred option for this sector. Research may also show that the level 4 framework in Table 1 may be a driver to raise uptake of the level 4 professional qualifications.

The Suggested Framework for Wales

As shown within the European Master Craftsperson framework, a number of eligibility strands would need to be achieved to attain the title of Master Craftsperson. Table 1 is a suggested minimum level of accredited qualification attainment and suitable experience for each of the elements for the accreditation of a Master Craftsperson.

Table 1

Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	
Level 4 NVQ Diploma Level 4 Extended Diploma		APL for Degree (If there is a competence element)		Competence
HNC/D in the relevant Discipline Level 4 Diploma (depending on pathway chosen)		APL for Degree		Knowledge
Assessor Awards Coaching - Minimum of ILM Level 3 Coaching and Mentoring.		APL ILM Level 7 Coaching and Mentoring		Coaching/Assessment/TDLB – Skills transfer

APL - ILM Level 5 Coaching and Mentoring.		
Completion of a Management Level 3 or 4 frameworks including modules on leadership skills, mentoring, communication, collaborative working etc.		Management Financial People Strategic thinking
Exemption from certain competence and knowledge modules.		Professional Registration
Must have 3 to 5 years' industry experience in sector since completing a Level 3 qualification.	Must have 3 to 5 years' industry experience in sector since completing a Level 3 qualification.	Length of Time Serviced (Minimum period to be agreed).

The Knowledge and Competence Strands

Within the various European models this strand varies greatly. Most frameworks include the successful completion of an apprenticeship programme and/or an equivalent vocational qualification in the relevant trade. Austria however, sets the minimum entry at 18 years of age with no qualification requirement. These entry requirements then allow progression on to further learning to attain the Master Craftsperson vocational qualifications. Around Europe these range from Level 4 to Level 6 EQF equivalents.

The suggested Welsh framework sets this strand, at a minimum of level 4, as an entry point. This could range from a HNC/ HND knowledge based qualification combined with a work based NVQ competence based qualification or a combined Knowledge and competence based qualification such as an NVQ Diploma. The qualification list would need to be developed but it should reflect the standards set within the Higher Apprenticeship framework or be at least of diploma size (37 credits) within the QCF qualification sizing structure. The questions for this strand are:

1. Should Level 4 be the minimum qualification level requirement for a Master Craftsperson?
2. Should the strand have options for a knowledge or competence only route?
3. Should the qualifications be of diploma size to be recognised?
4. Should a vocational degree exempt the candidate from the competence qualification requirement?

The Management Strand

Within the European frameworks, the management content varies but all have a core based around business, legal and economic knowledge and competences. It is an imperative part of the Master Craftsperson accreditation in Europe and it is envisaged that the management strand will have equal importance in the Welsh framework. To determine the requirements for this strand, the questions are:

1. Should the management requirement be units or a full diploma size qualification?
2. Should it be knowledge only or a knowledge/competence qualification?
3. Should the accredited management qualification match the knowledge/competence level or be set at different level?
4. What should be set as a minimum content level; HR, finance, leadership, entrepreneurship, legal, self-management, people management etc.?
5. Are there any other management skills that should be included?

Skills Transfer

Within a number of the more successful Master Craftsperson programmes, there is a focus on the Master Craftsperson gaining formal teaching and training skills as part of the accreditation requirements. It is also seen as an integral part of the proposed Welsh framework. It is proposed that this strand be a formally recognised qualification that can be from teaching and training qualifications and that there would also be an option of including the assessor award in this strand. The questions here are:

1. Should this strand contain a formal qualification requirement?
2. How large a qualification, in credit equivalence, should the minimum requirement for this strand be?
3. Should this strand be teaching and training only?
4. Should coaching and mentoring qualifications be part of this framework?
5. Should this strand give the option of the assessor award as an accreditation option?

Work experience

European countries have adopted different models, varying from gaining qualification on successful completion of their apprenticeship on the one hand; to a maximum of 10 years' post apprenticeship experience on the other. This is then followed by a varying training period for the Master Craftsperson knowledge before the exams can be taken. This ranges from 0 to 3 years. There is only one country that stipulates a minimum age for eligibility (set at 18 years of age), and one further country that

comments that candidates are usually between 25 and 35 years of age. The requirements for work experience would need to consider:

1. How many years within the industrial sector should the candidate have to have completed before they gain Master Craftsperson accreditation: 1, 3, 5 or 10 years?
2. Should this time include the apprenticeship training period?
3. Should the qualifying period also include any upskilling training periods that help the candidate achieve the Master Craftsperson criteria?
4. Should there be a minimum age for Master Craftsperson candidates?
5. Should the qualifying work experience be focussed on experience in the higher role only?
6. Should candidates undergo an interview process to formally accredit the experience of the candidate against the framework requirements?

Professional Recognition and Accrediting Bodies

The responsibility for the accreditation of the Master Craftsperson in European countries varies greatly from sector specific Chambers of Commerce through to specific government departments. Within the European models, there is no mention of professional recognition as either an exemption route or an additional outcome. Consideration needs to be given as to whether the frameworks should have exemptions if candidates have achieved professional recognition based on nationally recognised qualification achievement.

Should the Master Craftsperson accreditation be directly linked to automatic membership of a professional body? The current Level 4 apprenticeship framework in Engineering, for instance, can lead to professional accreditations such as The Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE), the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) and the Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS). This is due to these institutions recognising that this apprenticeship pathway provides the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to allow apprentices to apply for Engineering Technician status within their institutions. Could the Master Craftsperson framework incorporate professional registration or use the professional accreditation to RPL parts of the Master Craftsperson qualification in all the proposed sectors if this is available. Questions in the area are:

1. Should professional recognition be mentioned in the Framework?
2. Should attainment of the framework give you professional recognition?
3. Should professional registration be an allowable RPL route for the Master Craftsperson qualification?
4. Should framework attainment be linked to professional recognition?
5. If so, which professional bodies?

6. Should professional bodies control the framework accreditation?
7. Should it be a government function to create and manage the frameworks?
8. Who else could manage the certification of the framework to maintain the set standard?

Management Sector Option

For people who are solely managers within businesses and not sector qualified professionals who are also managers, the proposed framework in Table 1 would not have the flexibility for attainment of the Master Craftsperson framework. For this sector a slightly different framework is suggested. This is shown below in Table 2:

Table 2

Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7		
Level 4 NVQ Diploma Level 4 Extended Diploma		APL for Degree (If there is a competence element)		Competence	Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Financial ● People ● Strategic thinking
HNC/D in the relevant Discipline Level 4 Diploma (depending on pathway chosen)		APL for Degree		Knowledge	
Assessor Awards Coaching - Minimum of ILM Level 3 Coaching and Mentoring. APL - ILM Level 5 Coaching and Mentoring.		APL ILM Level 7 Coaching and Mentoring		Coaching/Assessment/TDLB – Skills transfer	
Exemption from certain competence and knowledge modules.				Professional Registration	
Must have 3 to 5 years' industry experience in sector since obtaining a management position.		Must have 3 to 5 years' industry experience in sector since obtaining a management position.		Length of Time Serviced (Minimum period to be agreed).	

This variation on the originally proposed framework would allow qualified managers to complete the Master Craftsperson Framework. The main difference is the removal of the management strand as an additional requirement. This would mean that to achieve the framework a qualified manager would use their qualifications in management to cover the knowledge, competence and management requirements. The other significant change is the length of service section. In this strand the required experience has become 3 to 5 years since obtaining a management position and not since qualification. The questions for this section are:

- Should managers have different framework requirements?
- Should the applicant’s management qualifications cover the three sections Knowledge, Competence and Management?
- Is 3 to 5 years’ experience in a management post sufficient to gain a Master Craftsperson framework?
- Should there be additional strands or requirements for this route?

Level 3 Option

In Wales, not all employment routes have an effective Level 4 knowledge and competence qualification, that is a sector standard. There is an additional suggested route for candidates who have achieved a level 3 and are seen as leaders or experts in their sector. Table 3 highlights the suggested framework for this option.

Table 3

Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	
National Diploma	APL for HNC/HND		Academic
NVQ Diploma NVQ Extended Diploma			Competence
Level 3 Diploma			Knowledge
Coaching - Minimum of ILM Level 3 Coaching and Mentoring.	Assessor Awards APL - ILM Level 5 Coaching and Mentoring.		Coaching/Assessment/TDLB – Skills transfer
	Complete a recognised Level 4 Management qualification at diploma level.		Management Inc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◐ Financial ◐ People ◐ Strategic thinking

	Exemption from certain competence and knowledge modules.	Professional Registration
Must have a minimum 5 - 10 years' industry experience in sector since completing a Level 3 qualification. Be working as a leader in their company		Length of Time Serviced (Minimum period to be agreed).

There are currently apprenticeship frameworks, at level 3 that covers numerous pathways within the sectors being discussed. For instance, within Engineering, there are 12 Pathways in total and these could be a feeder for a level 3 Master Craftsperson framework. Would this Level 3 option for Master Craftsperson be viable and in demand?

The following questions should be considered:

1. Is there demand for this Level 3 option in the engineering sector?
2. Would it be given the same industry recognition as the Level 4 only route?
3. Would setting the Management strand at Level 4 give this route additional validity?
4. Should the experience period in a leading post be longer in this framework?

Phase 1 Conclusion

This document aims to set out and lead the research phase of the project looking into the viability of adopting the Master Craftsperson accreditation that is currently being delivered in Europe. This research need has been identified by Colleges Wales in their NCP role, representing Wales in the development and monitoring of the European Qualification Framework.

This first section has focussed primarily on the potential frameworks that could be offered in Wales and the research needed to ascertain their potential viability. This research will now be undertaken and the results will be analysed in the following months and its conclusions published in phase 2 of this paper. The research will begin in the following weeks for each of the below sectors:

- Hospitality and Tourism
- Finance
- Business Management and Administration
- Construction
- Health and Social Care

- Engineering

It is envisaged that the results for the collective research will determine if there is a demand for the Master Craftsperson framework in Wales and will be published and submitted to Welsh Government, with the relevant recommendations, within the next few months.

Phase 2 Findings

The research phase has now been completed within each of the sectors highlighted for investigation. These findings can be separated into general and specific outcomes related to the proposed research questions.

The engagement and responses to the consultation have been positive and have gained a fair representation of views from a range of stakeholders. The majority of the responses have been received from Educators, Sector Skills Councils and delivery agencies. Employers have engaged in a number of sectors but this is an area that will require further development.

The responses from the relevant stakeholders indicated that there is a strong belief that the addition of the Master Craftsperson framework would be a positive step for Wales. It is suggested that this would give parity with Europe when either working with or competing with other countries for international investment or business. A number of stakeholders did state that for this parity to be achieved, Master Craftspersons would need to be recognised, supported and marketed by Welsh Government, if it is to gain sufficient traction to be effective. Further research in this area is recommended.

When discussing the potential implementation with employers the ability to compete internationally was paramount to some large employers but for other employers, brand development was a higher priority before they would commit resources to helping staff to attain the framework. The general concern was the lack of a current market for the Master Craftsperson once their staff had achieved the framework. There was also concern around the cost implications of attainment and if there will be any potential financial support for those undertaking the framework.

When discussing the official designation, most respondents felt that the suggested title of Master Craftsperson would sufficiently describe the level of expertise and qualifications held by the title holder and give parity with the European framework. There were a few alternate suggestions that were sector specific; for instance, Health staff preferred Master Practitioner, where Engineering suggested an alternate name of Master Technician. This could suggest a need to use different designations for different sectors. Some stakeholders felt that this was necessary, whilst others felt that this could 'water down' the brand identification and introduce confusion in the process. The General European brand includes the universal use of a single title for all sectors

with the additional designation of the craft title, such as Master Craftsperson (Engineering). Further 'brand' research is necessary to determine the viability of either answer.

The two suggested frameworks at Level 3 and Level 4 were given positive receptions. Stakeholders felt that in general the strands within each framework were applicable and necessary to create the desired professional measurement in each sector. Certain sectors felt that the Level 3 framework was unnecessary as their practitioners were already at degree level (Health). Other sectors felt that the level 3 framework would be most applicable as the requirements for the Level 4 framework are above the sectors qualifications norm. Further research in each area will be required to establish individual sector needs.

There is support for the individual qualifications highlighted in the various framework strands. The qualification sizes/levels, the use of existing qualifications for RPL/delivery purposes and the potential development of new qualifications were supported in most cases. However, to confirm suitability, the current qualifications would need to be assessed for sector currency/credibility and previously delivered qualifications for RPL purposes. There would also need to be research to look at potential cohort sizes of currently eligible learners for immediate accreditation, in each of the purposed sectors of the Master Craftsperson pilot. There were specific questions around the management and the knowledge transfer strand. These were based on funding, RPL and qualification accreditation. These questions should form part of the future research investigation.

There was general discussion about how the framework was to be assessed and certified. Some of the suggestions are that this could fall under the Regulator's control, the Centre for Innovation in Wales, that ColegauCymru / CollegesWales should hold the accrediting power, the Sector Skills Councils should judge and accredit the certification or even Awarding Bodies. The mechanics of the process will need to be developed through the next phase of research if the pilot is to be successful.

Phase 2 In Conclusion

The research project has shown that there is sufficient support for the Master Craftsperson project in Wales and that further development should be undertaken. The suggested title and qualification structures have been shown to be appropriate and ready to move to a pilot stage. That there is sufficient stakeholder support to move forward and that the potential Governmental support should be secured. The pilot would have to explore the additional questions raised in this research and the development of the mechanics of the framework delivery now needs exploration.

It is now anticipated that the project should proceed to the pilot stage, at a pace that maintains the current momentum of contribution and collaboration.

Recommendations

The main recommendation is that this project move forward into a 4-year pilot phase with the support of stakeholders and Welsh Government. To achieve this a number of factors need to be achieved. These are:

- Discussion with Welsh Government representatives to gauge support and discuss potential implementation
- The development of a programme budget – anticipated to be approximately £90,000
- Securing an external evaluation source to verify the pilot's validity and support value for money.

The next recommendation is focussed on the mechanics of the process. Research will need to be conducted and processes developed for the legitimate assessment and certification of the Master Craftsperson frameworks that are both legally and nationally recognised. This will need to include:

- Deciding on the assessing, certificating and monitoring organisation
- Developing a potential logo and certificate that shows the achievement and is a recognisable brand
- What qualifications currently exist that will be accepted under the framework requirements
- Previously accredited qualification must be assessed for RPL validity
- Do further qualifications need development?
- What funding will need to be either created or is currently available to fund any learning required in the pilot process.

The next recommendation is based on employer and consumer support. Further research will need to be undertaken to assess employer support for Master Craftsperson as a nationally recognised framework. Research into the viability of the brand as a description of excellence, to consumers in Wales and the world, would need to be completed if the framework is going to impact on potential GDP growth in Wales, especially during this uncertain Brexit period. This stage of the research cannot be undertaken until both the mechanism and the brand are in place. The support from Government will also be key in this area.

The final and main part of the research will be around accrediting participants in multiple sectors and starting at differing points in the accreditation process. It is

suggested that the pilot be aimed at approximately 100 participants across a minimum of 4 of the original sectors researched (Engineering, Construction, Finance and Hospitality). These 100 participants should be distributed as follows:

- Short term (Within 1 year) - 50 participants, across any of the sectors, who have met the requirements of the Master Craftsperson framework or who solely require the knowledge transfer qualification to attain Master Craftsperson status
- Medium Term (Within 1 – 2 years) - 30 participants, across any of the sectors, who are qualified in their 'Craft' and who are currently undertaking management training at the appropriate level
- Long Term (within 3 – 4 years) - 20 participants, across any of the sectors, who have qualified in their 'Craft' or are near completion of the relevant qualification. These will then be supported to undertake the additional management and knowledge transfer strand in the work experience window.

These are suggested numbers and can be varied across the timeframes and sectors. It is envisaged that the budget will primarily support this part of the project. A suggested budget will be attached in the appendix of this paper.

These recommendations set out the basis for the pilot project. There is an anticipation that the pilot phase, if implemented, will start quickly and the first phase of accreditations occur within a short period. It is believed that this early accreditation will create further demand, build momentum in the process and create brand awareness. The external evaluation throughout the process will add a robustness to the outcomes and future developments and allow Wales to gain further ground in the domestic and world-wide markets.