



Personal Learning Accounts

Commonly asked questions



1. Who is eligible?

You must be:

- Employed and earning under £29,534 per year OR
- Furloughed worker (any salary) or self-employed
- Over the age of 19 years old
- Able to travel to the college venues
- Living in Wales

2. How can the programme be accessed?

- For Grwp Llandrillo Menai please email changeyourstory@gllm.ac.uk to enquiry about the PLA.
- For Coleg Gwent please email pla@coleggwent.ac.uk or visit www.coleggwent.ac.uk/learning/part-time/personal-learning-accounts
- Contact Working Wales on **0800 028 4844** or visit www.workingwales.gov.wales.

3. Do I need any specific skills or qualifications?

As the programme is aimed at individuals that would like to change their career then no prior knowledge is needed of the sector. Some of the courses can be accessed with no specific skills or qualifications. However, you can discuss the course requirements with your Working Wales adviser or with the college when you have a pre-admission assessment.

4. How do I know when the course will run?

The college will do their best to meet the needs of everyone when planning the dates and times to run the courses. The colleges are flexible and will aim to deliver the learning around people's family and work commitments. Your availability will be discussed during your pre-admission assessment.

In addition, a number of online courses are being delivered through the colleges.

5. What is Working Wales and why do clients need to register with them?

Working Wales provides a simple approach to employability support by providing individuals with a single point of contact through which they can access the personalised advice, guidance, support and training they need to secure and maintain long-term employment.

The free advice service offers face-to-face as well as support via digital means i.e. telephone, webchat, E-mail, 1-2-1 advisory support using Microsoft Teams for video interviewing, to anyone over the age of 16 who is not in full-time education and wants to secure a job. Support available includes job specific training, job searches, CV writing, confidence building, interview preparation and securing work placements. The expert advisers can also signpost people to programmes where they can access childcare support and transport assistance.

It is now the main channel for people looking for training and employment.

6. How is the course being funded?

Welsh Government is funding 100% of the course costs.

7. How much will it cost me?

The course will be 100% funded by the Welsh Government. However, you will need to pay for your travel and ensure you have sufficient time to be able to commit to attending and completing the course.



8. Will I have to refund the course fees if I am unable to complete the course?

The Welsh Government is funding the Personal Learning Accounts Pilot. We understand that personal circumstances change and there will be situations where participants may be in a position where they are unable to continue with their course. During the pilot phase there wouldn't be a cost to you. However, we do ask that you ensure you can commit to the course prior to starting. As this is a pilot, we would not be able to guarantee you could continue with your learning through a PLA in the future.

9. Can I access more than one course?

Yes, prior to starting the course you will be offered to develop a training plan which will set out the courses/qualifications you can undertake to help you progress your career in whichever sector you choose. However, you must ensure that you can commit to completing any or all the courses prior to starting.

10. What happens if I drop out of the course, would I be able to apply again?

We understand personal circumstances change. You could apply to undertake a new course, if you still met the eligibility criteria for the programme. However, if you dropped out of the course you would not be entitled to future funding through the Personal Learning Account pilot.

11. Why have these courses been chosen?

Skill shortages within the digital, construction and engineering, health and financial sectors are creating recruitment issues among employers.

These courses have been chosen following extensive engagement with employers, stakeholders, representative groups and potential participants to ensure they address the skill shortages within these sectors. We will continue to review this and additional sectors may be included in the future.

12. What type of account is it? Do I get money directly?

You wouldn't receive the money directly, you just need to enrol on the course. The college will be paid directly by the Welsh Government.

13. If it is a personal account will it support childcare, travel and so on?

No childcare or travel costs will be funded through the pilot.

14. What happens if I am made redundant when I am undertaking the PLA course?

We would hope that would continue and complete the PLA course.

You would also be eligible for support from the ReAct programme providing all entry conditions are met. In such cases, individuals will

- be able to continue training with the support of a PLA and
- the new employer will be able to apply for the ReAct wage subsidy and the ReAct employer training grant

Further information on ReAct can be found at www.gov.wales/react-and-access-coronavirus-guidance-employers and www.workingwales.gov.wales





15. Do I need to prove my eligibility?

Yes, you will be asked to show your photo ID and proof of earnings before completing a simple self-declaration form.

16. Can my employer apply on my behalf?

No, your Personal Learning Account is personal to you and the aspirations you have for your career goals.

17. When do I study for my qualification?

The colleges are flexible and will aim to deliver the learning around people's family and work commitments. Your availability will be discussed during your pre-admission assessment.

You will need to arrange your own time to study your qualification. You could learn in a classroom environment or online class on a certain day of the week.

As a result of the impact of Covid-19, the courses will be delivered in line with the government's regulations.

18. How can I give feedback?

We would be very interested to hear your personal story about how a Personal Learning Account has helped you to change career and realise your career aspirations. These questions will be part of your learning plan.

19. Are these open to the self-employed?

Yes these are open to the self-employed, employed and anyone who has been furloughed, providing that you meet all other eligibility criteria.

20. Are you eligible if you already have a degree?

Yes you are, if you already hold a degree qualification. If you're currently studying on a full-time basis for a degree or any other formal qualification, you would not be eligible.

21. Will Personal Learning Accounts be rolled out across Wales?

The Welsh Government will make an announcement shortly on the future of the Personal Learning Account Programme.

22. Am I still eligible if I am furloughed when I apply but the course doesn't start till September and my circumstances have changed?

Yes, your eligibility is tested at the point of application, if you are informed you successfully meet the eligibility requirements and are offered a place on that course, then your subsequent employment position as at the start date of the course is not applicable. However, if you apply for another PLA course, then your eligibility is tested again at that point of application.



Useful contact information

For more information or to apply for any of the courses being run by Coleg Gwent, call **01495 333777** or email pla@coleggwent.ac.uk.

www.coleggwent.ac.uk/learning/part-time/personal-learning-accounts

For more information or to apply for any of the courses being run by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai call **01492 542338** or email changeyourstory@gllm.ac.uk.

www.gllm.ac.uk/adult-and-community/personal-learning-account

For enquiries on any of the enclosed assets contact:

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