Guide to the Farming Connect Lifelong Learning and Development Programme

Contents

Registering with Farming Connect

Please register with Farming Connect using the link below, only then can you access the Lifelong Learning and Development Programme;

https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/farming-connect-registration

Logging in to the BOSS system

The BOSS system allows you access to all Farming Connect material. You can also create a Personal Development Plan. This is a useful tool that monitors your progress throughout the programme and is personal to you. It can be updated at any time, demonstrating your personal developments as your knowledge increases. The BOSS system can be accessed using the link below;
https://businesswales.gov.wales/boss/?lang=en

DO NOT try and register on to the BOSS system until you have received your individual registration e-mail from the Service Centre which will confirm your BOSS details (following your registration with Farming Connect). This e-mail will contain details which can be used to LOG IN to BOSS via SOC (Sign On Cymru).
Please note : On SOC the customer creates their own password and will need to use their email address as the username.

Registering with BOSS for the first time

Please register using the same email address that you registered with Farming Connect to log into BOSS for the first time.
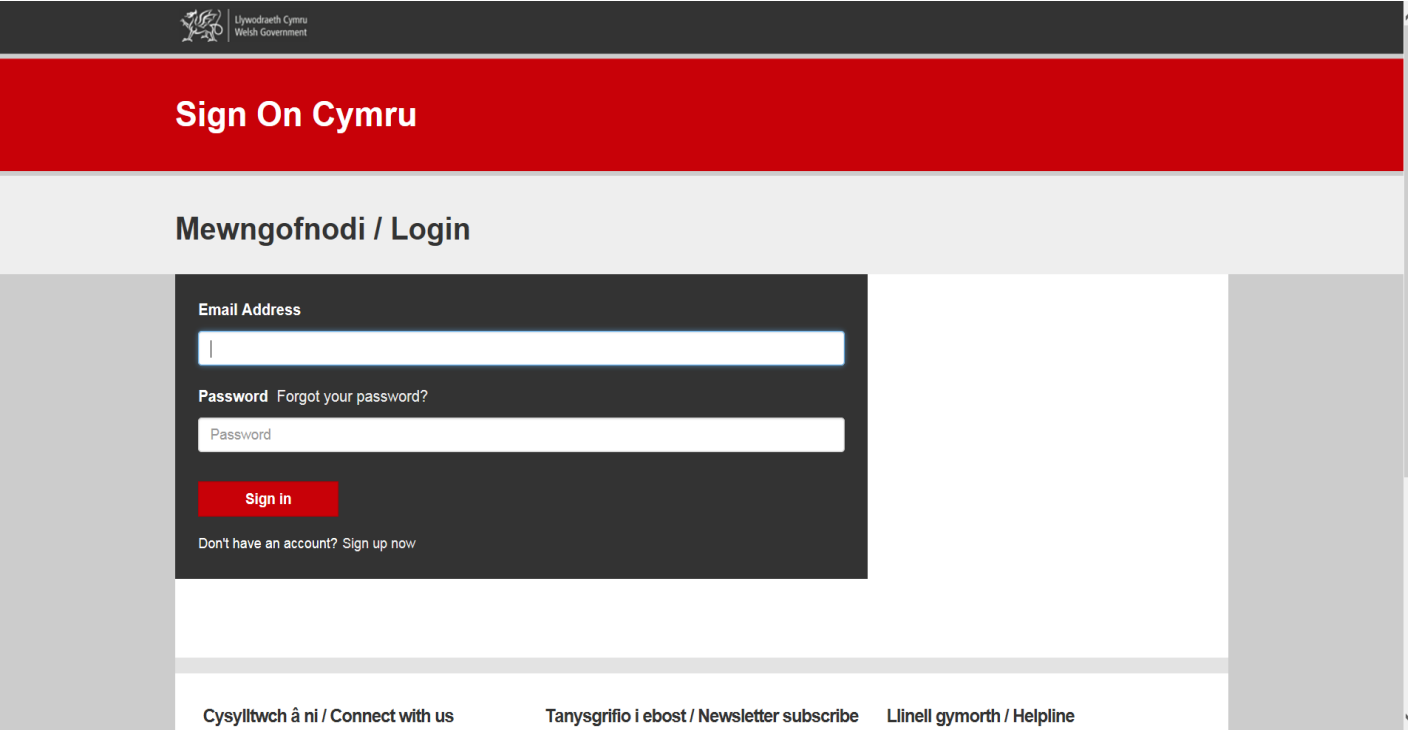
The BOSS website link is: https://businesswales.gov.wales/boss

- Click **Sign in with SOC** - You will be transferred to the SOC interface once on the SOC interface click **Sign up Now**
- Enter the email address used to register with Farming Connect
- Click Send verification code
- A verification code will be received to your registered email address
- Enter the received code in verification code field on the SOC form
- Enter your new password, and confirm this in the second field
- Click Continue, you will be transferred to the BOSS profile page
- Please complete all mandatory fields and save, you will then be transferred to the BOSS dashboard, presenting your existing learning history and associated information.
- If you click the cancel button or try to exit the page without saving you will not be able to access the BOSS dashboard.

Logging into BOSS after registering with Sign On Cymru

- Using the email address that you registered with BOSS and Farming Connect log in here and enter your password https://businesswales.gov.wales/boss/

Lifelong Learning & Development Programme

The aim of the Lifelong Learning and Development Programme is to deliver a more professional farming and forestry industry which will be delivered through a combination of direct training and on line e- learning. It is designed to support the ambition for farming and forestry businesses to become more efficient, perceptive and resilient and will be delivered through four main areas:

Continuous Professional Development – a comprehensive framework which records all Farming Connect activity completed by an individual

Personal Development Plan – an online tool to help individuals identify short and long term goals, skills gaps and identify training needs

E-Learning modules – interactive learning packages which allows users to learn at a time convenient to them

Short Accredited Training – funding available for completing training courses through an approved network of training providers

Personal Development Plan (PDP)

A Personal Development Plan (PDP) is an action plan based on awareness, values, reflection, goal-setting and planning for personal development. It is an ongoing document that can be updated at any time and is personal to the individual completing it.

It also assists in identifying strengths and weaknesses and enables the individual and others to measure progress. In line with this, completion of an on-line PDP will be a compulsory first step for an eligible individual to access the funding for training to the Lifelong Learning and Development Programme.

The plan is a useful tool in signposting certain areas where strengths could be maximised and weaknesses improved.

For further information on how to complete a Personal Development Plan please refer to the User Guide on How to complete a PDP.

How do I apply for funding for Short Accredited Training Courses?

1. You must be registered with Farming Connect
2. You will need to complete the online **Personal Development Plan** before you can submit an application for funding. This process can be done at any time, this does not have to be within the application windows.
3. If you are applying for funding for a Category 3 course – Machinery & Equipment Use, you must complete the online **Health & Safety (H&S) Course** before submitting an application.
4. Speak to your local approved training provider about course dates and obtain course costs. YOU MUST ENSURE THAT YOU PUT THE CORRECT COURSE TITLE AND COURSE COST ON THE APPLICATION FORM.
5. Apply online for the funding during an open application window using the online Application Form.
6. For more information on how to submit an application please refer to the User Guide on How to submit a funding application.
7. You will be notified if your funding has been approved or not, you must receive funding approval in writing (sent via email from the Service Centre) before commencing the training.
8. Once you have received funding approval you must pay the training provider the agreed contribution (20% of the total course cost for Category 1 & 2 courses, 60% of the total course cost for Category 3 courses.)

Am I Eligible for Funding?

This will depend on your eligibility status when you registered with Farming Connect. If you are unsure about your eligibility status please contact the Service Centre – 08456 000 813.

1. Farming Connect Full - Farming / Forestry
Business partners, immediate family members (spouses, sons & daughters) and employees on PAYE are eligible to a maximum of three courses per annum. If the client is Under 40 at the time of submitting the application, they are eligible for up to five courses per annum. However clients are only able to apply for one Category 3 – Machinery & Equipment Use within a 12 month period.

2. Business Contractor - Farming / Forestry
A maximum of three courses per business over the duration of the programme.

3. New Entrant
Business partners are eligible to a maximum of three courses per annum. If the client is Under 40 at the time of submitting the application, they are eligible for up to five courses per annum. However clients are only able to apply for one Category 3 – Machinery & Equipment Use within a 12 month period.

Am I Eligible for Funding?

This will depend on your eligibility status when you registered with Farming Connect. If you are unsure about your eligibility status please contact the Service Centre – 08456 000 813.

4. Niche Farming / Forestry systems >550 standard labour hour per annum.
Business partners, immediate family members (spouses, sons & daughters) and employees on PAYE to a maximum of three courses per annum. . If the client is Under 40 at the time of submitting the application, they are eligible for up to five courses per annum. However clients are only able to apply for one Category 3 – Machinery & Equipment Use within a 12 month period.

5. Systems <550 standard labour hour per annum
A maximum of three courses over the duration of the programme.

6. Student
A maximum of three courses per individual over the duration of the programme.

Approved Courses and Training Providers

All of the information can be found on the Farming Connect website and on the BOSS website

https://businesswales.gov.wales/farmingconnect/

https://businesswales.gov.wales/boss

Useful information

It is important to realise that once you have applied for an Accredited Training Course and completed the course cost section of the application, this cost **cannot** be altered after submitting the application.

After receiving funding approval if you are having difficulty completing the training or securing a training course, please contact Lantra on 01982 552646 as soon as possible so that we can look into the matter and assist you on completing the training.

If your funding application is not approved it is possible to re-submit an application in the next Application Window. Please contact your local Development Officer or chosen Training Provider who can assist you with completing your PDP and application form.

Useful information

Before submitting a funding application consider carefully the training provider you choose and the course that you request funding for. We do appreciate that on occasion you may encounter difficulties once a funding application has been approved and there are processes that have been put in place to help you complete your training course.

Is the training provider you selected having difficulty delivering your chosen course? If so you may need to change training provider after receiving funding approval. If you do wish to change training providers:

- Contact the Service Centre on 08456 000 813 or email cwcyswlltffermio@menterabusnes.co.uk

- They will email you a "Change of Request Form", which must be completed and returned to the Service Centre, you will be notified within 15 working days as to whether you have been successful. You must not commence the training until you have received written approval to change training providers.
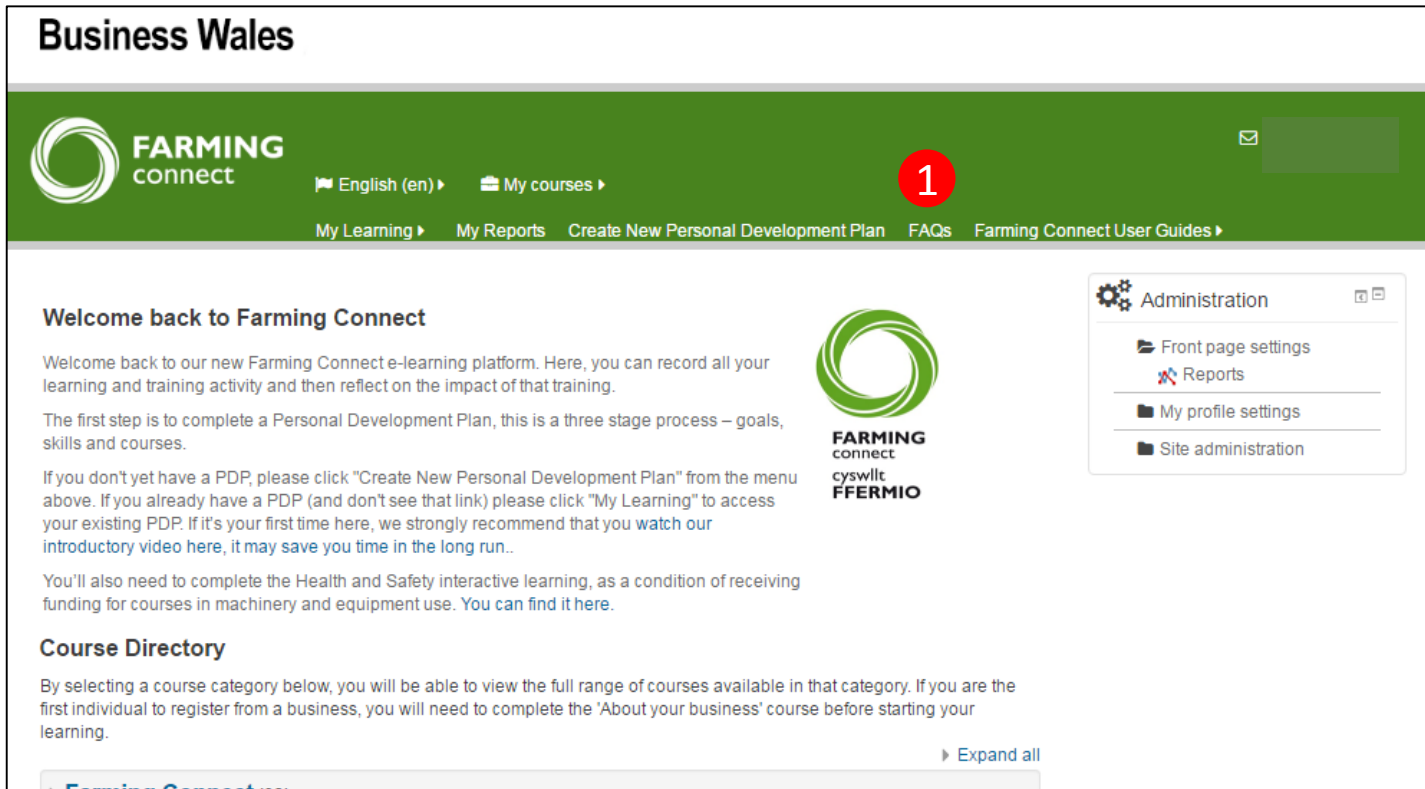
Useful information

All training courses must be completed within 9 months of the application approval date. If you are unable to complete the training within this period it is possible to cancel your approval under extenuating circumstances. It is the decision of Farming Connect to judge each request to cancel a funding approval on a case by case situation.

To cancel an approved application you must:

- Contact the Service Centre on 08456 000 813 or email cwcyswlltffermio@menterabusnes.co.uk

- They will email you a "request to cancel a course approval form", which must be completed and returned to the Service Centre, you will be notified within 15 working days as to whether you have been successful on cancelling your approval.

- If you do not inform Farming Connect that you need to cancel the application approval and the funding is not claimed within the 9 month period it will not be possible for you to submit a second funding application for the same course.

Handy Hints – Technical Issues

This page shows how to address technical issues within the BOSS site itself. If you have problems logging on in the first place, it would be useful to look at these FAQs and how to contact the BOSS team.

1. Click on the wording "Frequently asked questions" and the screen on the following slide will appear.

Handy Hints – Technical Issues

As you will notice two further clicks have been made. One on the word 'Technical' (1) and one on the phrase; '1. Why can't I see the course content? (Pop-Up Blocker)' (2). This may help if you are having difficulty even viewing the content.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *What is BOSS?*
2. *How do I access BOSS courses?*
3. *Technical*
    1. Why can't I see the course content? (Pop-Up Blocker)

        When you click to enter a BOSS course for the first time you may get a message stating 'Pop-Up Blocked'. A pop up blocker is software that prevents pop-up windows from appearing on a website. To find out how to turn your pop-up blocker off click here.

    2. How do I close a window?
    3. What is an Open Badge?
    4. What is a 'backpack'?
    5. What web browsers would you recommend I use the BOSS with?
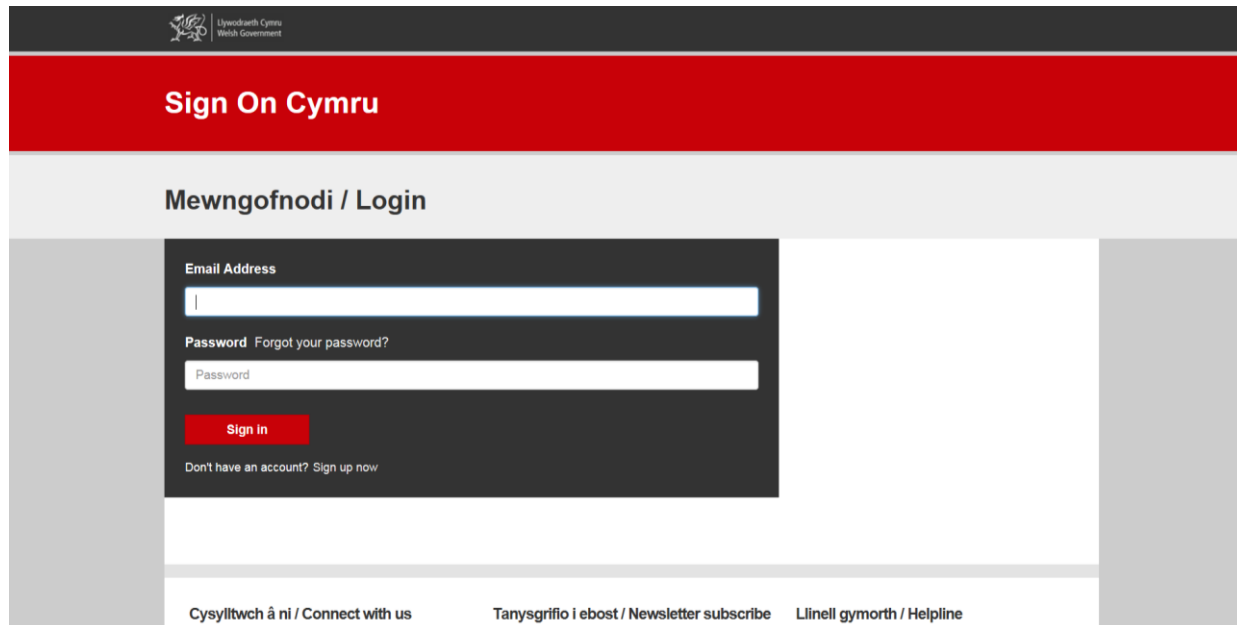4. *Eligibility and Access*
5. *Support*
6. *Courses*

Handy Hints – Logging in to BOSS

The BOSS system is a Welsh Government website, used by many different sectors.

Sign On Cymru is the new way of logging onto BOSS and was introduced on the 23rd August 2018.

Please note : If you would like to update your PDP, access your CPD Record, complete e-learning interactives and/or apply for short accredited training courses during an application window you will need to ensure you have verified your account- please see below if you are encountering difficulties in logging on.

Handy Hints – Logging in to BOSS

You must ensure that you still have access to the email address used to register with Farming Connect.

We strongly advise against using a different email address as doing so will create a new account, which will not carryover your training history, CPD Record or personal development plan (PDP).

Sign on Cymru will enable you to access all Business Wales online services, including your Farming Connect online account with a single username and password.

If users are still experiencing technical difficulty logging in, please contact the Farming Connect Service Centre on 08456 000 813 (9:00am - 5:00pm, Monday to Friday) except on public holidays.

Handy Hints – Internet Access

If you do not have access to the Internet, there will be a network of approved training providers, available on the Farming Connect website http://business.wales.gov.uk/farmingconnect/training who can assist with the completion of the PDP.

You can also ask your local Development Officer who can help locate sites with internet access. Farming Connect will be holding several events where it will be possible to complete the PDP at locations across Wales with internet access. More information on these events will become available on the website in due course.

Handy Hints – Browser Problems

If you are having Browser problems, the BOSS system works best on Google Chrome so it may be advisable to download this browser, this is easy and free to do.
https://www.google.com/chrome/index.html.

The Browser acts as your door to the internet. Browsers are all slightly different, but they all allow you to 'surf' the internet and access different websites.

If you have a Windows device, you'll have a browser program called Internet Explorer.

If you have an Apple product, then you'll use a browser called Safari.

There are also other browsers available, such as Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox.

Handy Hints – Live Chat

If you have a technical question, you will see that there is a help arrow bottom left in a yellow box saying "Need help". Click on upwards arrow on right (1) and you will be able to access Live Chat with the support team 9 to 5. If you are completing the PDP outside of these hours they will get back to you as soon as possible.