



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

BRIGHTER FUTURES



Our vision 2021-26



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About us

Career Choices Dewis Gyrfa Ltd trades as Gyrfa Cymru Careers Wales. The company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Welsh Government and the vehicle to deliver its statutory obligation to make careers information, advice and guidance available to children and young people up to the age of 19.

In recent years, we have also directly responded to the increasing needs of adults through the Working Wales service.

We employ over 600 staff including those within Careers Wales and through our Working Wales service. Overall, staff are situated in 30+ locations around Wales.

OUR VISION

to create brighter
futures for the people
of Wales

OUR PURPOSE

to support young people and adults in Wales to create brighter futures. We will do this through access to high quality, impartial careers support that makes a positive impact on individuals' education, economic and wellbeing outcomes



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

We will achieve this by:

- Keeping people switched on to learning
- Encouraging them not to close down opportunities too early
- Broadening horizons and challenging inaccurate assumptions
- Creating relevant experiences of and exposure to the world of work
- Contributing to improved education, economic and social outcomes.

OUR VALUES

We put the needs of the customer
at the heart of what we do

We collaborate with others to
achieve shared goals

We are innovative, technology-enabled
and insight-led

Croeso
Welcome



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales

OUR PRINCIPLES

Impartial

Acting as an honest broker supporting
career choices and decisions

Personalised

Ensuring our blended careers support service
is specifically tailored to individuals' needs

Inclusive

Committed to achieving inclusion,
fairness and diversity



Creating brighter futures for the people of Wales

We are proud to introduce our new vision, which has been developed with our staff, customers and partners as a statement of our collective ambition to deliver a brighter future for the people of Wales.

Perhaps the one certainty we have in preparing this strategic vision is that the economic and social impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will be felt by the people of Wales, our businesses and communities for years to come.

On a national and international scale, the recovery from the pandemic recession requires fundamental shifts in outlooks and attitudes to work and skills.

Our vision sets out the vital role that our bilingual, all-age, independent and impartial careers support service will have in supporting the nation's economic recovery, underpinned by our belief that in these difficult times, we must focus on a brighter future.

Through Working Wales, we will be there to help people overcome barriers through our careers guidance and coaching service, personalised to support individuals to build the skills, confidence and knowledge they need to change their story.

We will ensure that our services are available for those who need it the most, reaching out to support those who are not in employment, education or training.

Partnership working is one of our core values as an organisation. We know that we cannot achieve our goals alone and will build stronger partnerships with our stakeholders and increase our outreach, co-location, co-creation and collaboration in communities across Wales.



As we look to the future, we will play our part in ensuring our economy has an abundance of highly skilled, motivated young people ready to fulfil their potential. We will take steps to give everyone the best chance to find and keep fair and decent work with long term prospects.

We will support young people to raise aspirations, broaden horizons and awareness of all the opportunities and pathways available to them. We will start this activity earlier with new careers and work-related experiences (CWRE) initiatives for primary schools and increase our engagement with parents and carers. We will be supporting schools and teachers in the delivery of the Curriculum for Wales and the key role of good CWRE in supporting educational attainment and achievements.

Our services will be there for young people and adults, preparing them for the moments that matter – those key transition points in their career journey where they will be making decisions that will have an impact on their future goals.

We will build on our excellent relationships with the business community in Wales, increasing the opportunities to inspire and motivate young people by giving them greater insight into the world of work and the skills needed to succeed in the future.

Most importantly, underpinning our vision is our professional, skilled and dedicated workforce. As a national careers service, we are privileged to have a place in schools, communities, high streets and workplaces right across Wales.

We are uniquely placed to support the people of Wales in delivering a world class, sector-leading national careers service. We will ensure that as we build a brighter future for individuals in Wales, no-one is left behind.

Debra Williams,
Chair



Nikki Lawrence,
Chief Executive





Making a difference

- **For young people:** an improved understanding of the world of work, the skills needed to succeed and greater awareness of opportunities available to them, underpinned by access to impartial careers guidance and coaching
- **For adults:** access to professional, impartial careers guidance and coaching to help them overcome barriers and progress into fair and decent work and training
- **For businesses:** through our work with schools, colleges and communities, employers will have closer links to their future workforce. We assist businesses and employees when facing redundancy, supporting reskilling and upskilling
- **For schools, colleges, training providers and universities:** motivated, inspired learners with clear plans for their careers, supporting improved attainment and progression
- **For Welsh Government:** careers guidance and coaching supports the successful functioning of the labour market, improving economic outcomes, supporting and facilitating social mobility and enhancing the wellbeing of young people and adults





Delivering brighter futures: our four goals

We have developed four strategic goals that will enable us to achieve our vision of creating a brighter future for young people and adults.

They are:

1

To provide a bilingual, inclusive impartial careers guidance and coaching service for the people of Wales



2

To develop our work with employers, training providers and entrepreneurs to understand their skills requirements and opportunities for young people and adults

3

To support delivery of the Curriculum for Wales and contribute to the achievement of the four purposes

4

To develop a skilled, engaged and agile Careers Wales workforce and enable the delivery of high performing, customer-centred services



GOAL ONE

To provide a
bilingual, inclusive,
impartial careers
guidance and
coaching service
for the people of
Wales

About this goal

Supporting people to find their way into sustainable work and enabling them to play their part in a thriving Welsh economy is at the heart of everything we do.

Whether it is inspiring and motivating young people to achieve their career goals in school or college or helping adults to overcome barriers and develop new skills, we know that supporting people into work is good for the individual, good for the economy and good for Wales.

The economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will be felt for many years to come. We know there are people who will be disproportionately affected and will need careers guidance and coaching services more than ever. We will work with partners to understand and address barriers to accessing learning or work and look to offer tailored support to disadvantaged groups.

We know that the best way to achieve our goals is by working together - with parents, teachers, employers and partners across the public and private and third sectors. We will be increasing our presence in communities around Wales, strengthening our partnerships and exploring new opportunities for collaboration, co-operation and co-location.

We will be engaging with parents and carers to help them support children, raise aspirations

and broaden horizons. We will work to proactively challenge stereotypes and bias across the labour market. Through our work in schools, colleges and marketing activities we will change perceptions around the suitability of certain pathways and sectors.

In order to make the right decisions, people need the right information. Our work with young people and adults at key transition points will ensure they are aware of all the opportunities and pathways available to them - including apprenticeships, training, volunteering and employment.

This will be supported by access to timely, relevant and up to date labour market intelligence in Wales, increasing understanding and awareness of critical skills and occupations. By making well informed choices that are right for the individual we can enable them to make positive transitions, helping to reduce drop outs and churn in the post-16 sector.

And through our commitment to innovation and continuously improving our services, we will use technology to enhance our services ensuring they remain modern, accessible, and customer-centred.

Over the next five years we will:

- support young people and adults to make positive transitions into Education, employment or training (EET), including apprenticeships and understand the skills required to succeed in the labour market and contribute to the future economy of Wales
- support customers who require enhanced levels of support to make positive transitions into appropriate provision
- raise customer awareness of EET and other progression opportunities
- improve access to the benefits of careers guidance and coaching support through collaboration and engagement with partners and influencers.



GOAL TWO

To develop our work with employers, training providers and entrepreneurs to understand their skills requirements and opportunities for young people and adults

About this goal

Strong and effective employer engagement is one of the most important factors in inspiring and motivating people and preparing them to take their place in a rapidly changing world of work.

Through Working Wales we will forge closer links between employers and work with them to address recruitment and skills gaps while identifying opportunities to support our customers into work.

Enabling young people to develop their insight and knowledge of the world of work is one of the essential ingredients in inspiring and motivating them to plan their career goals.

Through our employer engagement activity in schools across Wales, we are enabling young people to gain a greater awareness of what to study to match their career ambitions and the different pathways and opportunities that are available to them.

There are benefits for employers who get the opportunity to build stronger community links and relationships with their future workforce. They can also engage directly with young people about the knowledge and skills that the modern workplace needs.

To deliver this we will be supporting the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales and offering schools a range of CWRE designed to meet their local needs.

Our offer will continue to evolve and be designed around the needs of our schools, learners and businesses but could include facilitating employee visits and talks, careers fairs, webinars and tailored work-experience through the Activate project*. We will also pilot a national, virtual CWRE week - a high-profile national campaign to deliver a focused week of virtual CWRE activities in all primary and secondary schools.

The future is an open book for young people and we want them to write their own stories. Through our collaborations with schools, employers, parent/carers we can prepare them for the future by ensuring they keep the aspirations high, their horizons broad and develop the skills they need to fulfil their potential and play their part in a brighter future.

Over the next five years we will:

- Inform and motivate young people about the world of work through engagement with employers and role models
- Raise young people's awareness of the skills required by economic priority sectors and how they link to the curriculum.

* Activate is funded through the European Social Fund and is due to end in March 2023.



GOAL THREE

To support delivery of the Curriculum for Wales and contribute to the achievement of the four purposes

About this goal

The Curriculum for Wales is the key driver for the delivery of education in our schools. The four purposes are the shared vision and aspiration for every child and young person to become:

- **ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives**
- **enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work**
- **ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world**
- **healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.**

Careers and work-related experiences is an essential component of the Curriculum for Wales. We recognise that the skills of motivation, self-awareness, opportunity awareness, decision making, application and resilience will help learners achieve the four purposes.

There is a focus on developing skills and preparing young people for a life beyond the classroom, helping them raise aspirations and develop awareness of a range of career choices.

We will support the implementation of the CWRE statutory guidance by providing consultancy support for relevant schools leaders and develop a programme of professional training for teachers to build the CWRE capacity in our schools.

We also want to celebrate CWRE excellence in our schools to recognise high performance and support the raising of standards across Wales. We will be building on the success of our CWRE award to drive this forward.

Positive careers and work-related experiences will help learners to develop career plans, build self-awareness, raise motivation and increase knowledge of the labour market.

We will work with primary schools to build children's awareness of the world of work at an earlier age, raising awareness of job roles, the positive benefits of work and challenging stereotypes - learning that will help them make informed and appropriate decisions in secondary school.

We look forward to working with all learners, teachers and stakeholders in this hugely exciting chapter for the delivery of CWRE in Wales.

Over the next five years we will:

- **deliver a high-quality professional learning service to build the skills, knowledge and confidence of educational professionals to deliver effective CWRE**
- **design and deliver a new CWRE award for excellence in the curriculum**
- **proactively support the implementation of the CWRE statutory guidance**



GOAL FOUR

To develop a skilled, engaged and agile Careers Wales workforce and enable the delivery of high performing, customer-centred services

About this goal

Enabling the delivery of our vision will be our highly skilled, engaged and agile workforce - one that is true to our values of putting the needs of our customers at the heart of everything we do.

We believe that investing in our people delivers better outcomes for customers and will continue to do this through our commitment to learning and development.

We will build an engaged and empowered workforce by ensuring we have strong leadership, a compelling vision and a strong employee voice.

Technology continues to change the world around us at a fast and ever-accelerating pace, creating new opportunities to improve the services we offer customers and raising expectations.

We are already well advanced in building our new digital capabilities, developing the skills and confidence of our staff through training programmes while providing them with continuously improving technology that is safe, secure and easy to use.

We will continue to be responsive to the needs of our customers. Where there is evidence that it adds value, we will develop new, accessible,

future-proof digital services, including exploring the potential of AI and automative technology. We will work in line with the all-Wales digital standards and our work will be set out in our digital roadmap. We will support the digitally excluded and ensure no-one is left behind.

Through the implementation of a customer relationship management (CRM) system we will be developing new and more efficient processes that will help us deliver better services and free up resources for more customer-facing delivery.

We will develop real-time feedback loops to engage with customers and stakeholders. We will use social media and digital tools to effectively communicate and engage with customers with a right audience, right channel, right content, right time approach.

We will develop new insight-led platforms and dashboards that will enable us to understand how well we are meeting customer needs and ensure services can be continuously improved based on evidence and customer insight.

As a customer-centred culture, our transformation will be measured on how well we are meeting the needs of our users. We will work openly and seek opportunities to collaborate with others, including strengthening our UK and international relationships to achieve our goals of enabling the people of Wales to create brighter futures through future-ready, digitally-enabled careers services.

Over the next five years we will:

- **develop personalised, customer-centred services, enhanced by technology, responsive to user needs and accessible to all**
- **create a skilled, engaged and agile Careers Wales workforce that is inclusive and supportive of employee wellbeing**
- **optimise our use of technology to transform our ways of working and develop the digital skills and capabilities of all Careers Wales employees**
- **ensure our policy and service developments are informed by customer insight, business intelligence, data and analytics.**



STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

To achieve our four goals, we will focus on delivering our strategic outcomes.





An all-age careers guidance and coaching model

From the learning choices young people make in school through to re-training for a new career later in life, we are here for the moments that matter.

Our all-age offer recognises that not all people progress in the same way or will face the same challenges but is here for people at those key moments when they need professional, impartial careers guidance and coaching.

Our targeted offer will provide those young people who are under-represented in education, employment and training with the additional support they need to make successful transitions in learning and work.

PRIMARY

- **Introduction to CWRE and Careers Wales services**
- **Learners:** an introduction to CWRE, Virtual CWRE Weeks
- **Parents:** introduction to Careers Wales, build an understanding of labour market information and how to support their children
- **Schools:** blended professional learning for teachers, resources available on Hwb

SECONDARY (Years 7-9)

- **Broadening horizons, raising aspirations**
- **Learners:** webinars, virtual CWRE weeks, employer engagement, group work, options support and introduction to career quizzes
- **Parents:** engagement through social media, focus groups, invites to CWRE events, enhance understanding of labour market information and trends
- **Schools:** professional learning, CWRE award, support with option choices and ALN transition reviews.

SECONDARY (Years 10-11)

- **Making informed and effective decisions**
- **Learners:** Careers guidance and coaching
- Career Check assessment
- Intensive support for targeted groups including young people with additional learning needs (ALN)
- Employer engagement activities such as virtual CWRE weeks, webinars, employer site visits and careers festivals
- Support for those entering the labour market
- **Parents:** Parental engagement including attendance at school events, invites to careers events and social media campaigns
- Pilot community projects to proactively engage parents
- **Schools:** professional learning, CWRE award, careers guidance and coaching services, transitions and pupil destination support

16-18

- **Supporting effective transitions in learning and work**
- Early identification and assessment of support needed
- Continued careers guidance and coaching support for targeted groups including young people with ALN
- Referral to appropriate career pathways such as employment, apprenticeship, volunteering and training opportunities
- Support to improve employability skills such as access to the Skills to Succeed Academy
- Vacancy bulletins and invitations to job / training fairs
- Allocation of expert advisers to all tier 3 customers
- **Schools/FE colleges:** Targeted campaigns for those who need our support including a, physical presence at FE premises at key times during the year; dedicated careers adviser for every sixth form and FE campus.

ADULTS

- **18+ supporting effective transitions through identification of barriers and appropriate referrals**
- Access to Working Wales support in person, at a location to suit individual needs, or digitally
- Referrals into training, employment and additional support, and support to make job applications
- Advice on funding sources as appropriate e.g. ReAct, Access, Personal Learning Accounts (PLA) etc
- Regular targeted marketing campaigns aimed at key priority customers

SUPPORTING OUR CUSTOMERS TO CREATE BRIGHTER FUTURES

“ You made me feel like I wasn't just a number and that someone really did care. I was the lowest I could possibly be when I left my job. I was in a dark place, but it was like there's the key, open the door, the lights are on – let's go for it. You have given me confidence in myself, now it's a much brighter future! ”

John 61

Re-training as a rosette chef

“ Before my chats with the careers adviser I had no idea what I wanted to do, but I knew that college wasn't for me. It was reassuring how understanding the adviser was about me not going to college. It helped me clear my mind and focus on what I wanted to do. ”

Abbie 16

Starting an apprenticeship

“ Without Careers Wales' help I would be struggling. I trusted the information from the adviser more than just searching the internet – there's too much fake stuff out there! My adviser knew what they were doing, she is well informed and I trust her answers. ”

Mandy 18

Enrolled on a traineeship

“ I wouldn't have found my current job without them. I had no internet, no television, and so the contact with the adviser kept me going. I would give the service 11/10 and recommend them to everybody – I told my friend, go to Careers Wales, they will help you. ”

Xolani 55

Gained a full-time care work position



Working Wales

#changeyourstory



OUR DIGITAL AMBITIONS

In Changing Lives we set out a new digital vision for Careers Wales and how it would be achieved.

Through the delivery of Brighter Futures we will be building on the progress we have made, focusing on similar themes but with greater ambition and aligning our transformation with the Digital Strategy for Wales.

DIGITAL SERVICES

Excellent digital services are designed with the purpose of meeting the needs of the people who use them. They are continuously improving and accessible to all.

The modernisation of our services will include a focus on personalisation - the next exciting phase in our drive to support the right people with the right service at the right time.

We will be deploying more sophisticated customer segmentation to offer a more personalised marketing and communications offer - one that can drive positive changes through more timely, relevant and engaging content.

As part of our support for the Curriculum for Wales, we will be developing a profile for young people that will enable them to personalise their careers education journey

with opportunities to reflect and record experiences and develop these to inform their future plans through easy access to our range of career management tools, resources and information.

Our innovation team will build on our journey to embed the culture, practices and technologies of the digital age. We will build on the success of our gamification, expanding on our use of platforms such as Minecraft.

Through our commitment to agile development, we will take the approach that no service is ever complete, and we will be always learning and improving. We will continue to have a relentless focus on meeting user needs and base our decisions on insight gained through activities such as user research and analytics.

COLLABORATION AND DATA

Working with our partners in Welsh Government, stakeholders in the education and business sectors and young people, we will be developing a truly unique offer, bespoke to Wales, that can stay with people throughout their academic and professional lives and help them create their own brighter futures.

We will look to develop an intelligence hub to maximise the use of our data. We are uniquely placed in every school and community in Wales to provide insight into the career goals and aspirations of young people and the barriers that people face.

We will work openly and collaboratively with partners and stakeholders and will adopt the all-Wales digital standards and play an active role in the ambitions of the Centre for Digital Public Services.

Where we can, we will share code, learnings and other products we create. We also share our data, safely, to enable others to create social value from it.

INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Where new services and ways of working are identified we will be developing a robust approach to digital inclusion to support those who cannot access our services online. We will work with partners and develop a robust approach to standards to ensure that the Careers Wales and Working Wales websites are exemplar platforms for accessibility.

DIGITAL SKILLS

We will increase the digital skills of our workforce so they can take advantage of the opportunities that new technology provides to create better, more modern services. Through our careers guidance and coaching we will support individuals to find suitable training to equip them with the digital capabilities and confidence they will need to succeed in everyday life and work.

PERSONALISATION

Through the Careers Wales digital platforms, customers will receive personalised experiences and information, driven by AI and automation to meet their needs

GAMIFICATION

We will engage and inspire young people to broaden their horizons using gamification techniques on platforms such as Minecraft



DATA AND INSIGHT

Our data-driven insights, visualisations and mapping will provide a hugely valuable resource to drive policy development and service design



AI

Our omni-channel customer experience will be powered by the development of AI-driven applications to create a better and more efficient service for customers and employees





Skills for the future

Future generations are going to find themselves in a rapidly changing world of work - one that is transforming faster than at any point in history.

We know that technology will continue to advance and demographic changes in our communities will mean jobs emerge, evolve and disappear faster than ever before.

Our professional careers guidance and coaching will be preparing young people for a world of work that is radically different to that of their parents. Many young people will be working in roles that do not currently exist using technology that is not yet invented.

We will ensure that people in work are being supported to adapt and learn new skills as job roles change continuously and are re-shaped by technology advances.

To achieve our goals we will be focusing on raising awareness and helping customers to develop the skills that they need to play their part in a new Welsh economy. Through our strategic partnerships, our employer engagement activities and labour market information analysis, we will identify both the broad-based and specialist skills that are most likely to be important for both people, employees and businesses of Wales both now and in the future.

Careers Wales has mapped the integral skills set out in the Curriculum for Wales to a robust career management skills, guidance and coaching framework.



ENGAGING WITH EMPLOYERS TO CREATE BRIGHTER FUTURES

“ We are grateful to Careers Wales for giving us the opportunity to get into schools. We need the support to reach the deprived areas. It's important to give chances to children who don't have the opportunities. Careers Wales is a really beneficial way for us to connect with schools. The service is therefore critical as it puts us in direct contact with young people. ”

Sports & Leisure,
Buckingham Group Contracting Ltd

“ We choose to work with the children that are deemed to be more challenging. We open the children and the schools to what the construction industry can offer. We aim to show them that they are capable and give them something to aspire to. ”

Celtic Horizons

“ It has helped us massively. In two years, our links with schools through Careers Wales has put us in touch with nearly 5000 young people. ”

Screen Alliance Wales

“ Careers Wales has a critical role in joining schools and businesses. Young people don't know what's out there and so a visit to a company or a talk can plant a seed that makes all the difference. ”

Alan Brayley, AB Glass



The Well-being of Future Generations

The disproportionate impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the labour market for young people and adults means careers guidance and coaching has never been more important.

Careers Wales with its partners is aware of the scarring effects on wellbeing caused by unemployment and low incomes, particularly among young people. Our preventative service can support people to make good career decisions and choose the right pathway for them.

Through our values and principles, and by working with others, we will work in ways that ensure we are supporting the delivery of the nation's wellbeing goals:

PREVENTION	Understanding the root causes of issues to prevent them from occurring
COLLABORATION	Working with others in a collaborative way to find shared sustainable solutions
INVOLVEMENT	Involving a diverse population in the decisions that affect them
LONG TERM	Looking to the long-term so that we do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs
INTEGRATED	Taking an integrated approach focusing on wellbeing goals when setting wellbeing objectives

Our vision will support the seven wellbeing principles by:

A PROSPEROUS WALES

Supporting the development of young people and adults to have the skills to manage their own careers. This will deliver social and economic benefits for individuals, families and communities as well as the economy.

A RESILIENT WALES

Building the skills of customers will help build resilience and adaptability to deal with the challenges presented by increasingly complex career paths.

A HEALTHIER WALES

Increasing the chances of an individual not becoming NEET and remaining active in society, raises earning power and has a positive impact on people's physical and mental wellbeing.

A WALES OF COHESIVE COMMUNITIES

Promoting opportunities for local people will help develop the talent pipeline and reduce skills gaps helping to make communities attractive and viable.

A MORE EQUAL WALES

Providing all young people and adults with the services they need and supporting them to overcome barriers; raising aspirations and challenging stereotypes.

A WALES OF VIBRANT CULTURE AND THRIVING WELSH LANGUAGE

Delivering a bilingual service which responds to the needs of individuals and partners across the regions of Wales. We will raise awareness of the skills needed by employers including Welsh language skills.

A GLOBALLY RESPONSIBLE WALES

Increasing awareness of both the Welsh and global labour markets, including any future changes, challenges and opportunities within education, economies and the environment. We will connect people to learning and work, and the industries (e.g. green tech) which are addressing these.



Delivering the Welsh agenda

The delivery of our Brighter Futures vision will see us strengthen our contribution to supporting Welsh Government's wellbeing and economic goals and address a number of key challenges and priorities.

Post-compulsory education and training (PCET)

We will support the delivery of the strategic vision in Wales by working with the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research, providers and key partners to ensure that professional, independent advice and guidance of education and career pathways is available to all in post-compulsory education and training.

Digital 2030

Aligned with the PCET reforms we will raise awareness with our customers of the digital skills needed to support the Welsh economy. Where our careers guidance and coaching has identified specific needs, we will support individuals to find suitable training to equip them with the digital capabilities and confidence they will need to succeed in everyday life and work.

Curriculum for Wales

We will continue to work with schools on the implementation of the new CWRE elements of the Curriculum for Wales, supporting them to deliver the four purposes.

Employability plan

We will build on the success of Working Wales to support the objective of reducing the number of people who are NEET, and support unemployed, economically inactive and those at risk of redundancy, into work and training.

Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act

We will work with our local authority partners to support the delivery of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act, with our specialist team offering careers guidance and expert advice for young people, teachers and parents in all special schools in Wales.

Cymraeg 2050

We will support the Welsh Government's vision of a million Welsh speakers by 2050 through our bilingual service delivery and ensuring young people and adults are fully aware of the opportunities that Welsh language skills offer to future career choices.

Digital Strategy for Wales

We will align our digital transformation with the Digital Strategy for Wales, adopting the Welsh digital standards and embracing opportunities for collaboration to provide customers with the best possible digital services.



Collaboration and partnerships

Our vision sets out the key role that careers guidance and coaching will play in helping create brighter futures for people in Wales - but we cannot achieve anything in isolation.

A core value of Careers Wales and engrained in the ways of working in the Well-being of Future Generations Act is a willingness to collaborate with stakeholders and establish partnerships that enable us to maximise the positive impact on our customers.

Through our presence in schools, colleges and high streets across Wales, we have a unique presence in the lives of Welsh people and their communities.

By supporting young people and adults, increasing their knowledge and understanding of opportunities, skills needs and the local labour market, our services will play a key role in helping develop more resilient, local economies.

Our partnerships across the public, private and third sector in Wales are well developed, however we recognise that this can always be enhanced.

We work closely with businesses, sector bodies, local authorities, city and growth deals and regional skills partnerships to ensure our guidance and coaching services are increasing awareness of opportunities and the skills required to succeed.

We will expand the range of businesses we connect with and ensure that our labour market information is robust, timely and relevant to the people of Wales.

Our business engagement activities broker relationships with schools, providing work-related experiences and exposure to the world of work for young people, while helping businesses enhance their local reputation.

All schools and FE colleges in Wales will have a dedicated careers adviser to ensure they are receiving the right careers support services to meet their students' needs. We work closely with Estyn, regional consortia and bodies such as Colegau Cymru to develop and deliver services for young people.

We will strengthen our working links with higher education institutions by exploring opportunities to build new and stronger relationships. We will pilot ways of working together serving the best interests of local communities and the people we serve.

“Through our presence in schools, colleges and high streets across Wales we have a unique place in the lives of Welsh people and their communities...”

Partnership working is one of the core features of Working Wales - we work closely with colleagues in Welsh and UK governments to support people in Wales as well as training providers, employers and businesses.

We recognise that through our new vision we need to build on these approaches and go further. We will look to focus more on co-developments, anchored both online and offline in local community multi-agency settings. We are aware of the unique challenges of potential isolation in rural communities and plan to work more closely with other agencies to ensure no-one gets left behind.

Where it can add value to the customer, we will seek opportunities for:

CO-LOCATION

working with partners to develop customer-centred services that enable agencies to meet their needs in an easier way. This could include shared premises that bring together careers guidance and coaching, welfare, health and wellbeing services.

CO-OPERATION

with employers, labour market economists and other specialists, training providers, further education and higher education institutions and voluntary organisations. Sharing insight and knowledge in the best interest of our customers.

CO-CREATION

of high-quality career development resources and tools that support partners, professionals and para-professionals to engage customers in professional, impartial career guidance and coaching.

SUPPORTING ALL YOUNG PEOPLE TO CREATE BRIGHTER FUTURES

“ My child was becoming extremely anxious about so many changes happening with his final year at school and during this pandemic and felt pressured with options and careers. The careers adviser was a pleasure to speak to and really put my child at ease. Her professionalism and input really made a big impact. ”

Parent of a Year 11 student

“ They were amazing and really helped me open up my eyes and broaden my horizons and what options I can do and helped me finalise my decision ”

Year 11 student

“ I can't thank you enough for all your help in this. I've been so lost trying to sort this out and anxious about it. I don't think you really truly know how this has helped us as a family. ”

Parent of a young person with additional learning needs

“ The careers adviser helped me work out what I wanted to do and gave me all the information I needed to make a decision. He made me feel like I could do it and that my choices were as important as everyone else. He made everything seem possible and is so encouraging. ”

Young person in education otherwise than at school (EOTAS)



Leave nobody behind...

Through our vision of creating a brighter future for the people of Wales, we will ensure that our services are accessible to everyone and we provide enhanced support so that nobody is left behind.

We will work with partners to identify those who need enhanced careers guidance and coaching and support them to overcome barriers and raise their aspirations.

Through Working Wales, we will continue to support people in the justice system, building on our successful work in prisons. Each prison in Wales will be allocated a Working Wales careers adviser who will work with HMPPS and key agencies to ensure that prisoners are well supported prior to release, at the threshold point and subsequently upon release. We will continue to pilot support for the women's prison at HMP Eastwood Park so that female prisoners domiciled in Wales receive appropriate support.

We will support the delivery of the Youth Employment Progression Framework* with our local authority partners, ensuring that young people get the support that they require as they make the transition from education into further education, employment or training. In school settings, we will build on our support for young people with additional learning needs, working in partnership with other professionals to support young people to make successful transitions from education. Our expert advisers will provide individual careers guidance and coaching and group sessions for ALN young people and other vulnerable groups.

We will continue to deliver the Activate project**, supporting young people aged 11-19 who have been identified as at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or

training) through work-related experiences and careers guidance and coaching. As part of our inclusive approach we will provide support for young people who are educated in settings other than at school. This will include those educated at home.

We recognise that accessibility, online access and data poverty are all factors that can digitally exclude people of all ages from accessing services and information they need. We will develop a more robust approach to ensuring our services are supported by an assisted digital offer including a range of appropriate channels and content for customers. This includes ensuring our digital platforms and content including our video and audio productions are exemplars for accessibility and the information and services we publish are available to all, particularly those who may have sight, hearing, cognitive or motor needs.

“We will identify those who need enhanced careers guidance and coaching and support them to overcome barriers and raise their aspirations”

We know that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities have been disproportionately affected by the economic impact of the pandemic. We will work with partners to ensure that our services are accessible to all communities in Wales and that any barriers are removed.

We will build on our successful partnerships with organisations such as Stonewall Cymru to deliver training for Careers Wales staff to ensure our workforce has the knowledge, awareness and understanding to deliver services to all customers.

We will build on our successful gender stereotyping teaching resources for young people, building on the positive feedback from teachers and deliver sessions that raise greater awareness and understanding of the issue to young people. This will also remain a key feature of our marketing campaigns with spotlights on key sectors such as construction, engineering and technology and the use of positive role models to deliver key messages.

*Our activity to support delivery of the YEPF will be subject to the Welsh Government review

**Activate is funded by the European Social Fund until March 2023



A vision for challenging times

The economic and social impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit and a workplace already being revolutionised by technology are combining to create a perfect storm in the labour market both in Wales and around the world.

We live in what can be described as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) times. Our services provide individuals with a sense of hope, resilience and optimism to create sustainable livelihoods, particularly those most disadvantaged.

Industries, geography and people matter. In Wales some sectors are expanding while others are in decline. There are regional and local variations in jobs, training and other opportunities. More people are having to change or switch roles more frequently than in the past.

We have identified a rising level of need for careers support driven by the impact of Covid-19 with Wales's lowest earners ten times more likely to have been affected by the pandemic than those on the highest salaries.

As well as low earners, Cardiff University's Wales Governance Centre highlights the economic disruption caused by coronavirus is also being felt most acutely by young people, women and those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

Covid-19 has resulted in higher rates of individuals not in education employment and

training (NEETs), such as displacement from certain key sectors including retail, tourism and hospitality. We need to find solutions that ensure no-one gets left behind.

We have adjusted our services accordingly, to provide significantly increased online support to young people, parents, teachers, employers and adults.

“Careers Wales is poised and ready to meet the challenge of supporting individuals with their transitions, choices and career decisions, particularly those most in need.”

We will take early measures that include preventative, integrated and recovery careers support services for young people and adults. This calls for local places and spaces for more career dialogue within local communities. People need easy access to blended and impartial careers support targeted and tailored to their specific needs.

Brexit also brings further uncertainty. Leaving the European Union will present new challenges which force us to reflect on how best to provide support to young people, adults, employers and training providers and local community partners.

Careers Wales is poised and ready to meet the challenge of supporting individuals with their transitions, choices and career decisions, particularly those most in need.

The OECD, International Labour Organisation (ILO), UNESCO, European Training Foundation (ETF), European Commission and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training have come together to strongly encourage governments and other key stakeholders to invest in career guidance.



A vision built on insight and data

This vision has been shaped by the insights and views of more than 3,500 young people, parents/carers, Career Wales employees, businesses, teachers, training providers, post-16 and post-18 providers and many more.

In 2020 we undertook a strategic review of the business to ensure that our new vision is built on evidence – bringing together all that we have learned through the delivery of Changing Lives and enhancing it with the insights of our customers and stakeholders across Wales.

From this analysis, three key themes emerged:

- An increased confidence in the key role of technology to support and enable the delivery of our services, providing a joined-up, omni-channel customer experience
- The importance of careers guidance and coaching for managing career decision making
- Ensuring people are not left behind and offering personalised careers guidance and coaching services through digital and non-digital services.

There is a clear message from young people and adults that Careers Wales services must be available at those key transition points in their lives. Whether it is seeking a career change, choosing subject options or pathways after education, Careers Wales will be there to offer support.

Young people and adults displayed a clear preference for face-to-face careers guidance and coaching and we will continue to place this offer at the heart of our service delivery model, ensuring it is there for those who need it the most.

Parents and carers asked for more communications from Careers Wales and an increase in employer engagement activities to enhance opportunities for student work placements as well as preparing young people to develop the skills they need to succeed in the world of work.

“There is a clear message from young people and adults that Careers Wales must be available at those key transition points in their lives.”

Young people in education expressed a preference for more structured, consistent careers support built into their timetable, while others wanted to see improved access to relevant careers information.

We are confident that this vision reflects the expectations of our customers and partners for Careers Wales to be a modern, relevant and inspiring organisation that is there for people in the moments that matter.



Delivering value and measuring impact

Over the next five years we will be continually assessing and reporting on the impact that our services will have on the educational, economic and wellbeing outcomes for people in Wales. We will maximise the use of data, tracking the progress and outcomes of students vulnerable young people and adults. We will build our relationships with academics and researchers to develop new insights to enhance our services and policy development.

Careers guidance and coaching supports people's educational, economic and wellbeing outcomes. We will undertake a feasibility study to explore the development of a new intelligence hub that informs and works collaboratively with other national, regional and local providers. We will identify trends within communities, sectors and demographics and work with partners to develop new programmes and initiatives to address specific emerging issues.

We will explore the fiscal benefits that Careers Wales' services provide to the wider economy and the added-value impact of activities such as:

- **reducing the numbers of NEETs**
- **improving job awareness, skills matching and employer engagement both within and outside of the curriculum**
- **improving integral, digital and career management skills**
- **increasing entry to employment, training, entrepreneurship and/or volunteer activities**
- **increasing wellbeing through careers support to help reduce dependency on the state.**

To demonstrate the return on investment (ROI) of our services, we have worked in partnership with dmh associates on the added-value return and impact of careers services in Wales. The interim results demonstrate a significant ROI.

Our recent modelling has shown that activities analysed to date, comprising circa £15 million of our typical annual spend, deliver over £35 million in long-term fiscal benefits for the Exchequer (in net value present terms).

We will build on this ROI analysis to address more elements of the theory of change model for careers guidance and coaching and build this into our service planning to ensure that we are delivering real value for money for the people of Wales.

We plan to explore options for further analysing Careers Wales and Working Wales data, undertake new data collection including potential randomised control trials (RCTs), and engage more national, regional and local partners to refine assumptions and co-develop innovative impact studies. This reflects our strong desire to work with Welsh partners and other interested parties to make good use of open data and labour market intelligence (LMI).

“We will identify trends in communities, sectors and demographics and work with partners to address emerging issues...”

We have agreed key performance indicators (KPIs) to guide and inform our strategic and operational plans. These will be monitored on a monthly basis with progress and any setbacks captured and reported using a new CRM system. We will produce performance dashboards and feedback loops to enhance performance.

We will also collaborate with UK, European and international research organisations for example, comparing approaches to diagnosis and assessment of customer needs, and impact measures linked to improved educational, economic and well-being outcomes. We will continue to share best practice with Skills Development Scotland (SDS), the Northern Ireland Careers Service, the National Careers Service in England and other interested parties.

Outside of the UK, we intend to collaborate with the National Centre for Guidance in Education, Ireland, the Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) and the Careers Industry Council for Australia (CICA) to share research instruments, develop collaborative approaches and produce key findings on assessing and measuring the impact of impartial careers guidance and coaching.



Theory of change model

The theory of change model assesses the short, medium and long term impact of careers guidance and coaching on an individual's outcome which could include:

Contextual factors

Individual circumstances e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, special educational needs and/or disability, locus of control, level of concern, curiosity, confidence, knowledge, skills and vocational maturity

Inputs

Digital and non-digital inclusive careers support e.g. preventative, integrated and recovery careers support services for young people and adults to make positive transitions into learning and work. Understanding the skills required to succeed in the labour market and contribute to the future economy of Wales

Immediate outcomes

Enhanced motivation, personal skills and knowledge base, understanding of self, opportunity awareness, job searching, career adaptability and resilience, increased awareness of human, social and cultural capital and reduced anxiety and stress

Intermediate outcomes

Improved job search strategies, occupational awareness and skills matching, increased labour market participation, expanded the available talent pipeline, reduced unemployment and associated benefit costs, increased employer and volunteer engagement in the new curriculum, decreased criminal behaviour and improved educational, economic and wellbeing outcomes

Longer term outcomes

Increased take up of opportunities, increased earning potential, improved levels of attainment, improved productivity levels, reduced recruitment and turnover costs and lowered skills mismatches and skills gaps



Gyrfa Cymru
Careers Wales