



Inclusive Apprenticeships

Disability Action Plan for Apprenticeships

2018-21

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Ministerial Foreword



We know that employment plays an important role in promoting people's independence, confidence, health and well-being. Yet only 45% of working-age disabled people in Wales are in employment in comparison to 80% of those who are not disabled. One of the Welsh Government's primary aims is to move towards an enabling and inclusive society; one where opportunities exist for all. Ensuring there are opportunities for disabled people to find and stay in work is a key element of our Employability Plan, which was published earlier this year.

The Apprenticeship Programme is a proven route into sustainable employment and I am proud that we have a successful Apprenticeship Programme here in Wales. That said, I recognise that in terms of the population of Wales the makeup of the apprentice cohort is far from representative of the diverse society in which we live. Since 2016, we have been funding an Equality and Diversity Lead to drive forward a culture change on the programme and increase participation from protected groups. Despite continued efforts on behalf of officials, our network of apprenticeship providers, employers and other partners, increasing the number of disabled learners on the programme has continued to prove a challenge; a challenge that we are determined to overcome.

Earlier this year, the National Assembly for Wales' Economy and Infrastructure and Skills Committee published their report Apprenticeships in Wales which highlighted the disparity between the proportion of disabled Apprentices in Wales compared to the number in England. It recommended that Welsh Government should produce a clear disabled person specific action plan.

To address this, an Inclusive Apprenticeship Working Group of specialist disability organisations, to whom I would like to extend my gratitude, has been established. We have worked with the group to identify potential barriers to apprenticeships and offer practical solutions to remove them. This work has culminated in the production of this Inclusive Disability Action Plan which I'm sure you'll agree is a step in the right direction. Annex A of the plan details the agreed actions; practical actions which will help us move towards a more inclusive programme which will contribute to our vision of an equal and inclusive Wales.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. E. Morgan'.

Eluned Morgan AM
Minister for Welsh Language
and Lifelong Learning



Background

Welsh Government is committed to creating a fair and equitable Wales where individuals have equity of outcome and inclusive access to apprenticeship skills within a workforce that reflects communities. Employers need to be able to recruit and retain the very best talent to develop their businesses from all walks of life. Disabled people need opportunity and access to relevant support to be able to develop successful careers and contribute to society.

This commitment is reflected in national plans and strategies. Our apprenticeship policy, *Aligning the Apprenticeship Model to the Needs of the Welsh Economy*, published in 2017, highlights our commitment to improving access, equality and equity of opportunity. This plan complements and supports delivery of *Prosperity for All*, and the Welsh Government *Economic Action Plan for Wales* published in December last year. Furthermore, the *Employability Plan* published in March 2018 sets out how the Welsh Government will support those furthest from the labour market, the economically inactive and those at risk of redundancy into work.

Against this back-drop the Welsh Government has adopted the Social Model of Disability to help identify solutions to the barriers disabled people experience. The Social Model encourages the removal of these barriers within society, or the reduction of their effects, rather than trying to fix an individual's impairment or health condition. It empowers disabled people and encourages society to be more inclusive so that disabled people have access to the same opportunities as everyone else. All public service providers are encouraged to use the social model when considering disability arrangements and equality and employment information.

The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 places a duty on Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions to identify and support young people with additional learning needs. Whilst the scope of this act does not extend to Apprenticeship delivery, its principles identify good practice that we will adopt.

Barriers for those with protected characteristics entering apprenticeship programmes was a key theme of the 2014 Estyn thematic report entitled *Barriers to Apprenticeship*. The report contained the findings of a review into the barriers for those with disabilities when entering apprenticeship programmes. It also contained information on the barriers experienced by learners from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups. A follow up report, *Breaking down barriers to apprenticeship*, was published in 2015.

In February 2018, the National Assembly for Wales' Economy and Infrastructure Committee published a report on *Apprenticeships in Wales*⁵. The Report included 14 recommendations which included one for the Welsh Government to produce a clear disabled person specific action plan to address the under representation of disabled people in apprenticeships. The Committee's report identified the potential barriers disabled people have accessing apprenticeships and the low numbers of disabled apprentices. This recommendation was accepted by the Welsh Government, in recognition that improvements needed to be made.

²Aligning the Apprenticeship Model to the Needs of the Welsh Economy: <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/apprenticeships/apprenticeships-skills-policy-plan/?lang=en>

³<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/employability-plan-for-wales/?lang=en>

⁴Social Model of Disability: <https://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/equality-diversity/rightsequality/disability/socialmodel/?lang=en>

⁵Apprenticeships in Wales



Background

Currently participation of disabled people in apprenticeships is not proportionate to the disabled population of Wales. One in five working age people in Wales have a disability or long-term health condition, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Yet, few apprentices in Wales are disabled; see table.

	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
Disability (impacting upon ability to learn and/or use general facilities)	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%
Disability and Learning Difficulties (impacting upon ability to learn and/or use general facilities)	3.4%	4.2%	4.6%	5.3%

It must be noted that the data is reliant on self-declaration by the apprentice. There could be an issue with under-reporting but the extent of this is unknown. It also relates only to disability or learning difficulties that impact upon the ability to learn and/or use general facilities.

To understand underlying reasons for this low take up, Welsh Government officials have consulted with partners from specialist disability organisations, and worked with them to develop an 'inclusive' action plan.



(Left to right) Team Leader Gareth Martin and Twm Draper

Twm Draper BT

Twm Draper, 20, from Gilfach Goch, is a full-time consumer help case manager at BT in Stadium House, Cardiff city centre. He finished an 18-month level three customer care apprenticeship in March, working and completing training at his workplace.

Twm has a bilateral hearing impairment which was diagnosed when he was three years old and wears a hearing aid in both ears.

After sixth-form, Twm didn't want to go to university, he wanted to work for a big company and start earning money. School was difficult for Twm who struggled to listen and write things down. He wasn't assigned a note-taker to support him in class until his last year at school, when he was in the second year of his A-Levels, and his results, he says, suffered as a result.

Twm encourages people to speak up as soon as they realise they need support, whether that's at school, in work or learning through an apprenticeship. He used to worry about how he'd manage at work but there's been no problem at all. Twm uses an adapted headset that blocks out background noise and hasn't needed to discuss his hearing impairment with his employers since.

Twm has plans to continue with BT and get as much experience as possible and hopefully go on to work in HR.



Alignment to other Welsh Government Policies

The Economic Action Plan

The Economic Action Plan was published in December 2017 and delivers a major shift in policy, delivery and ways of working. The Plan sets out a clear vision of an economy built on strong foundations, supercharged industries of the future and productive regions.

The people of Wales are a central focus of the interventions throughout the Plan. It sets out a number of key changes to our approach to economic development, all of which have the potential to support prosperity for all and inclusive growth.

The Plan sets out a new operating model for direct financial support to business, which was launched in May 2018. The new operating model, delivered through the Economic Contract, Calls to Action and consolidated Economy Futures Fund frames a new relationship with business based on the principles of public investment with a social purpose. The Economic Contract, in particular, has the potential to encourage and promote business behaviours that are more conducive to inclusive, diverse and fairer workplaces. It requires businesses seeking direct financial support to commit to growth, fair work, promotion of health, up-skilling and

learning in the work place and reducing their carbon footprint. It provides the opportunity to engage in a dialogue with employers on a range of issues that have the potential to support individuals as well as their business. This includes promoting and signposting to guidance and support for businesses to help them when employing disabled people.

Employability Plan

As part of the Welsh Government's national strategy, 'Prosperity for All', we published a cross-government Employability Plan in March this year which sets out our vision for an economy founded on high-quality skills and people with the ability to prosper – and our course of action to achieve this.

The Plan established an ambitious programme to deliver a more effective system of employability support, focusing on the diverse needs of individuals and a dynamic new approach to addressing the varying skills needs across the country. As well as innovative new projects and initiatives, the Plan laid out stretching ten year targets to set the direction for all partners working on employability so that we are more coordinated and efficient, united by common goals. We recognise too few disabled people are in work. A number of commitments set out within our

Employability Plan are aimed at tackling this. We will work with partners to address the issues, including employer attitudes, job design and working practices.

In partnership with the sector, we will develop a meaningful target which will reflect the needs and wishes of disabled people across Wales. Through setting a target, we hope to drive the step change necessary within both workplaces and society to break down the barriers being faced by disabled people and those with long-term health conditions seeking employment. We will publish a target on employment and disability by the end of 2018, to underline our commitment to this agenda.

We will continue to work closely with the UK Government through its Work and Health Unit and the Department for Work and Pensions to link up with the delivery of their UK-wide target to get 1 million more disabled people into work by 2027. We want to see positive results being delivered for more disabled people and those with limiting health conditions across Wales.

⁶Prosperity for All <https://gov.wales/about/programme-for-government/?lang=en>

⁷<https://beta.gov.wales/employability-plan>

⁸Employability Plan (2018): <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/employability-plan-for-wales/?lang=en>

Alignment to other Welsh Government Policies

Action on Disability: The Right to Independent Living

Our new Framework and Action Plan titled Action on Disability: the Right to Independent Living was published for consultation on 22nd October 2018. The Framework sets out how we are addressing social barriers to equality and inclusion so that disabled people have access to the same opportunities as everyone else.

The new Framework was developed after extensive engagement with disabled people and their representative organisations and builds on the work we have undertaken across Government since our original Framework, 'Framework for Action on Independent Living', was published in 2013. Our new Framework will help us to continue to tackle the areas of inequality which matter most to disabled people of all ages in Wales.

The new Framework is accompanied by an Action Plan which sets out a wide range of actions underway across Welsh Government to tackle some of the key barriers identified by disabled people themselves, including transport, employment, housing and access to buildings and places.

The new Framework continues to be rooted in the Social Model of Disability, recognising there are organisational, attitudinal and environmental barriers to equality and inclusion which must be removed to create a level playing field.



Corinna Roberts

Corinna Roberts Intellectual Property Office

Corinna Roberts, 26, from Tonybandy, has achieved a Foundation Apprenticeship and an Apprenticeship in Business Administration. She has also secured a permanent Civil Service job while juggling parental responsibilities and learning to manage her mental health. She believes that completing an apprenticeship has boosted her confidence and skills and brought value and fresh ideas to the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) in Newport where she works.

Struggling with severe obsessive compulsive disorder, anxiety and depression when she joined IPO, Corinna now helps others as a diversity and inclusion officer and has established the first mental health awareness programme of its kind.

Having trained as a mental health champion and as an allies' representative for the LGBT network, she has run cross government awareness sessions with IPO and Companies House.

She was the first apprentice at IPO to work part-time and from home but was able to complete the programme in the same time as her peers while juggling parental responsibilities and health issues.

Supported by training provider ALS Training, she plans to continue her learning journey by progressing to either a Higher Apprenticeship (Level 4), a Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development or an Open University qualification.





Nicholas D'Cruz

Nicholas D'Cruz Café Darcy

Nicholas D'Cruz, 25, from Swansea has autism-related learning disabilities which affect his ability to communicate and be independent. He wanted a job that would help him towards his long-term goal of moving out of the care home where he lives, into supported housing.

His social worker and Job Centre Plus advisor linked him with Shaw Trust, a charity helping people to enter work, gain an education and training and improve their wellbeing, who helped him to put together a plan to support him to develop the skills he needs to live on his own for the first time.

Shaw Trust key worker, Michelle Hunter Smith, helped him start a placement at Café Darcy, based in Darcy Business Centre in Skewen, and he's now on a Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in Hospitality with training provider, People Plus Cymru, supported by DWP Access to Work.

Nick rides 40-minutes from his home in Clydach to work and says doing an apprenticeship has changed his life. His role is busy and involves cleaning up, collecting dishes, chatting to the customers and he's recently started to prepare food.

His apprenticeship has helped him financially and allowed him to go to more places and do more things. He went to Silverstone this year and tries to go to as many musicals as he can.

It has also helped him with his confidence and says first he wants to learn how to cook and live independently and then, who knows what the future will hold for him.

What have we done so far?

Our drive for equality of outcome is focused on removing potential barriers to apprenticeships for disabled people, recognising that this group may need additional and individually designed support to remain and succeed.

All disabled apprentices are entitled to support under our Additional Learning Support (ALS) fund. This fund facilitates support for apprentices to overcome their barriers to accessing learning and training, for example, it can be utilised to cover either human or technical support. Apprenticeship providers can access the fund directly from the Welsh Government for additional support for learning which arises from a learning difficulty and/or disability and is necessary to empower individual learners to achieve. We encourage providers to utilise the fund to maximise support for disabled apprentices.

We recognise that some disabled people need to be supported onto the programme and whilst in employment possibly over and above ALS support. To this end, we have been working closely with Remploy to match those who are participating in the Work Choice and subsequent Work and Health programme into apprenticeship opportunities. This brings together the combined efforts of two major programmes, ensuring disabled people access work and develop skills that will

help them remain and progress in employment.

Recently we have developed and delivered bespoke Equality and Diversity training for apprenticeship training providers including informative and interactive sessions. The training was designed to enthuse, enable and equip assessors with a range of techniques that they could use in their work with learners. These sessions were well attended and covered an overview of the Equality Act and Equality Duties for Wales; Social Model of Disability; Mental Health; Autistic Spectrum Disorder Awareness; and Gender Stereotyping.

To support the training we have developed an Equality Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit, which was published online in June 2018. It contains a range of resources and useful information including guidance; tips; worksheets; informative videos; web-links and social media links. It covers topics such as Autism Spectrum Disorder Awareness, Disability Awareness; and Emotional Behaviour Disorders.

We have improved our marketing materials in this area by utilising case studies focussed on learners with protected characteristics to promote diversity within the apprenticeship programme. Sixteen out of the nineteen lead apprenticeship providers have committed to signing

the 'Time to Change' pledge and are working towards developing a proactive stance regarding Mental Health action plans. We have developed a new section of the Business Skills Gateway to support and encourage employers to recruit more disabled people. This site includes essential information and guidance on in-work support and programmes such as Access to Work.

This activity is underpinned and supported by National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW). From 2016 the Welsh Government has funded the NTfW Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead. This Lead has been providing the apprenticeship provider network with a supportive structure to assist them in increasing the take up of Apprenticeships by disabled people and Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. The funding for this role was recently extended to 2021.

Our recently published Employability Plan places issues of equality and fairness at the forefront of our approach. As Work Advice Wales is established we will see improvements in assessment processes prior to starting apprenticeships and Working Wales programmes to identify barriers. We will ensure that where barriers are identified they are followed up with individualised support.



Findings from Inclusive Apprenticeship Working Group

This plan has been developed in consultation with partners from specialist disability organisations in Wales. In June 2018, an 'Inclusive Apprenticeships Disability Round Table' event was held including all key disability stakeholders in Wales. Subsequently the Inclusive Apprenticeship Task and Finish Group was established consisting of internal and external stakeholders. The Group met for a series of meetings over the summer and autumn 2018 to identify potential barriers and weaknesses in current arrangements and help develop this Inclusive Apprenticeships Disability Action Plan.

In addition to Welsh Government officials covering a range of policy areas, the following organisations were represented on the Group:

- Disability Wales
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Elite Supported Employment
- Leonard Cheshire
- Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind
- Nationwide Access Consultants
- National Deaf Children's Society
- NTfW Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead
- Shaw Trust
- Remploy
- The National Centre for Mental Health, Cardiff University
- Whizz-Kidz

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) also attended the meetings in an advisory capacity.

The following barriers and weaknesses in current arrangements were discussed:

Marketing and raising awareness

- Disabled people generally do not feel that apprenticeship opportunities are available to them. Current marketing materials do not represent them and often apprenticeships are just not presented to them as a viable option.
- The group felt that the current Apprenticeship Matching Service (AMS) is not easily accessible and can be difficult to navigate.
- It was felt that more needed to be done to make employers aware of support that is available if they were to employ a disabled apprentice.

Role Models

- We need to identify disabled people who can be role models so everyone can see that apprenticeship opportunities are a real option for them – role models who people can identify with to sell the benefits of an apprenticeship. Individual role models should be inspirational and able to talk about their successful outcome.

There is also a need to identify role models within employers who can work strategically to influence engagement across the skill sectors.

Incentives/Motivations

- Historically, incentives such as subsidised work experience and financial incentives for employers have not led to shifts in the level of opportunities. The Group were unanimously against this type of incentive. The Group felt that there needs to be more of a focus on changing thinking, systems and approach amongst employers by using non-fiscal incentives such as providing job coaches.

Flexibility of Entry and Exit Criteria

- The Group felt that the current apprenticeship eligibility rules and requirements are not flexible enough to promote inclusivity. More specifically the requirement for employment for 16 hours as a minimum and having to complete Essential Skills at level two could be acting as a barrier for some disabled people. The suggestion was to allow more flexibility to the system without damaging the reputation and quality of the apprenticeship brand. Caution would need to be taken to ensure that disabled persons are able to attend necessary off the job training. It is normally expected, that attendance





(Left to right) Aled Wyn Williams, Dispensary Manager and Sarah Jayne Mawdsley

Sarah Jayne Mawdsley Ysbyty Gwynedd

Sarah-Jayne Mawdsley, 19 from Caernarfon is a pharmacy apprentice assistant at Ysbyty Gwynedd in Bangor. She has Mosaic Down's Syndrome, a condition that affects just one in 100,000 people in the UK, which means she has two or more types of different cells in her genetic make-up.

Sarah-Jayne left school with several GCSEs and like many teenagers didn't know what she wanted to do next. She joined Project Search, a one-year internship programme supporting people with learning disabilities and/or autism to gain skills and experience to move into paid employment.

In Wales, it's funded as part of the Welsh Government-supported Engage to Change project. The scheme helped her to start a Skills for Life and Work course at Llangefni College and she went on to work part-time in a shop. She's now working towards NVQ Level Twos in Pharmacy Services and in Customer Services, on a two-year apprenticeship at the hospital.

Her role involves taking prescriptions, answering the phone, greeting patients and advising them on waiting times. She has recently taken on new admin duties like filing and scanning.

Sarah-Jayne says having this condition doesn't stop her from progression in her career. She was inspired by a video on Facebook about a nursery school teacher in Argentina who had Down's Syndrome and believes she can do anything with hard work and determination.



Findings from Inclusive Apprenticeship Working Group

at off the job training is part of an apprentice's terms and conditions of employment.

- To enable apprenticeships to become more inclusive, it was suggested that a form of 'pre-apprenticeship' route be introduced at a lower level with progression onto an apprenticeship. The Group felt that consideration should be given, to whether the Working Wales programme, when it is introduced in 2019, could offer the necessary pre-apprenticeship support.

Data and disclosure

- The definition of disability was discussed throughout the sessions noting the difference between the definition under the Equality Act 2010, the Learning and Skills Act 2000 and what is classed as registered disabled. It was felt that some research was needed into the data we are collecting and how it fed into policy – the example of the work carried out by the Equality Challenge Unit in Scotland was given.
- The Group recognised that disclosure was an important and sometimes problematic issue given that apprentices are all in employment. It was recognised that apprentices do not have to declare an impairment or health condition if they do not wish to. It was felt that apprentices may be less likely to disclose than

learners on other "non – employed" status training programmes as they may be concerned that this could jeopardise their employment. Every effort must be made to provide an environment where all apprentices feel comfortable and confident to disclose their support needs.

Transition onto Apprenticeships

- The Group agreed that the issues regarding transition arrangements for disabled young people in general were far reaching and beyond the scope of the action plan. That said, it was agreed that there was a need for action to be taken to ensure that young people have at least an awareness of opportunities that exist when they leave education.
- The Group considered the Children's Commissioner for Wales report, 'Don't hold back.' Discussion focused on the report's message that "There are very limited opportunities for work and apprenticeships, with no supported employment opportunities – despite evidence suggesting this is particularly effective."

Support for Individuals

- The discussion centred on individualised support packages to enable those with support needs to enter onto an apprenticeship route and progress. In particular, it was mentioned,

that although apprentices receive support throughout the lifetime of their training there is very little up front support available currently. There is a gap in provision of services for those aged between 16-18 with a long-term health condition for job search activity and preparation for employment. During the apprenticeship, it may be that some disabled apprentices may require more contact time with the apprenticeship provider. It was also felt that individuals would benefit from an exit interview on completion of their apprenticeship to ensure that they remained in employment.

- The Group were keen for the Welsh Government to develop a bespoke pre-apprenticeship programme at a lower level, aimed at those who may have difficulty starting at a Foundation Apprenticeship level 2. This programme would include support to progress to a Foundation Apprenticeship at a later stage.

Support for Employers

- The Group agreed that there was a general feeling that a large proportion of employers are not aware of the support available to help them when employing disabled people. There are still many misconceptions amongst employers and there is work to be done to equip employers with

Findings from Inclusive Apprenticeship Working Group

the right information so that these opinions can be changed. The Group felt that most employers would like to be more inclusive but they do not know how to go about it. This is particularly true for smaller employers who do not have Human Resource specialists.

- The Group identified that the Access to Work Programme application process needs improvement and have made a recommendation that Welsh Government and the Inclusive Apprenticeship Working Group liaise with DWP to make suggestions on how it can be improved.

Support for Providers

- The Group felt that apprenticeship providers need more guidance on how to recruit, identify and support disabled learners and the employers that recruit them. There are a myriad of organisations, which could offer specialist support but this would need to be signposted and a review of the current Additional Learning Support Fund is required as it is currently underutilised. The Group felt that it would be useful if the Additional Learning Needs fund could be used by apprenticeship providers in partnership with support services such as mental health counselling and job coaches.



Caio Jones

Caio Jones Criccieth Health Centre

Caio Jones, 18 from Llanaelhaearn is a reception assistant at Criccieth Health Centre on the Llyn Peninsula. He was born with quadriplegic cerebral palsy, a condition which affects the arms and legs, and uses a wheelchair. He's currently having driving lessons and has ordered an adapted car that he hopes to be driving by next year.

After school, he joined Project Search, a one-year internship programme supporting people with learning disabilities and/or autism to gain skills and experience to move into paid employment.

In Wales, it's funded as part of the Welsh Government-supported Engage to Change project. The scheme helped him to start a Skills for Life and Work course at Llangefni College and linked him with a reception job on the minor injuries ward at Ysbyty Gwynedd where he spent six months

on a supported internship, completing courses in customer service. He is now working part-time as a reception and admin assistant at the health centre in Criccieth, on a two-year apprenticeship.

Caio says he loves working with people. His role involves dealing with prescriptions, answering the phone and booking appointments. He loves working in the NHS because it allows him to give back to the people that have helped him.

When not working, he loves playing on his PlayStation, listening to music and farming with his grandfather. He says his apprenticeship has been vital for him and that he wouldn't know what he would do if he didn't work. He believes that he's a very determined person and feels happy when he accomplished something that he's set his mind to.



What does success look like?

Success would be characterised by an Apprenticeship Programme, which is inclusive. Any individual regardless of their circumstances is able to find and undertake an apprenticeship and can be confident that if they choose to declare an impairment or health condition they will receive the individualised support package they require to achieve their apprenticeship and gain employment.

The aim is to remove as many barriers as we possibly can. The Inclusive Apprenticeship Working Group will advise on a specification of support for the programme.

How are we going to measure success?

The plan will be a working document and progress will be reviewed on an annual basis, by the Inclusive Apprenticeships Working Group. A progress update will be submitted to the Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning annually.

We will monitor how this cohort of learners achieve on their apprenticeship programme in comparison to others. Reports will be produced annually.

Annex A contains the Inclusive Apprenticeship – Disability Action plan which gives details of actions to be taken. Please note that this is a working document and we expect this to evolve during the three year timescale.

Annex B contains the context surrounding the plan including Welsh Government's obligations with regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Further Information

All enquiries about this plan should be sent to:

Further Education and Apprenticeships Division
Welsh Government
Ty'r Afon
Bedwas Road
Caerphilly
CF83 8WT
E-mail: DfES-ApprenticeshipUnit@gov.wales

Related Welsh Government Documents

Apprenticeships in Wales

<https://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/apprenticeships/?lang=en>

Apprenticeships Skills Policy Plan: 'Aligning the Apprenticeship Model to the Needs of the Welsh Economy'

<https://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/apprenticeships/apprenticeships-skills-policy-plan/?lang=en>

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

<https://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en>

Taking Wales Forward 2016-2021

<https://gov.wales/about/programme-for-government/?lang=en>

Employability Plan

<https://beta.gov.wales/employability-plan>

Framework for Action on Independent Living

<https://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/equality-diversity/rightsequality/disability/framework-for-action/?lang=en>

Action on disability: the right to independent living

<https://beta.gov.wales/action-disability-right-independent-living>

Glossary of Terms

Additional Learning Support (ALS) Fund

A Welsh Government fund that provides additional funding to facilitate the additional support that some learners require to effectively overcome their barriers to accessing learning and training. Providers should use ALS funding to respond to individual learner needs. Additional Learning Support funding can be utilised to cover either human support or technical support.

Apprenticeship

An employment based learning programme for employed learners following a recognised apprenticeship framework at level 3 approved for delivery in Wales. Apprenticeships can also be used as a collective term to refer to Foundation Apprenticeship, Apprenticeships and Higher Apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship Frameworks for Wales

Those frameworks which comply with the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW) and that have been issued by Issuing Authorities designated for the sector by the Welsh Ministers. All frameworks issued in Wales can be found at:
www.afo.sscalliance.org

Apprenticeship Matching Service (AMS)

An on-line matching service to assist employers in finding suitable Apprentices, and aspiring Apprentices, to find employers. In addition, this website advertises vacancies

for the Jobs Growth Wales programme. This site is hosted and maintained by Careers Wales who also advertise other employer vacancies at www.careerswales.com/en

Careers Wales Assessment and Referral Process

This is a process carried out by Careers Wales to effectively identify the needs, barriers, aspirations and vocational aims of customers, and thereafter to refer the customer to further assessment, training provision or further education.

The process of assessment may include:

- a diagnostic assessment exploring barriers and underlying causes
- Vocational Guidance Interview
- Careers Wales enhanced provision

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

The UK Government department responsible for Welfare and Pension policy. For more information on the DWP and their services please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions>

Diagnostic Assessment

Involves making judgements as to how a learner is performing against a pre-determined set of criteria. Diagnostic assessments may include basic measures of reading comprehension, writing, and mathematics using nationally endorsed tests.

It may also be extended to an assessment of an individual's soft skills or employability skills. A diagnostic assessment provides important insights into a learner's current skill levels and should be used in the formation and on-going development of Individual Learning Plans. Diagnostic assessment must be linked to further work to tackle any barriers identified.

Essential Skills qualifications are designed to assess the skills that learners need for successful learning, employment and life. Essential Skills provides a single ladder of progression from Entry Level 1 to Level 3 in Essential Communication Skills, Essential Application of Number Skills, Essential Digital Literacy Skills and from Entry 3 to Level 3 in Essential Employability Skills.

For more information, visit <http://qualificationswales.org/english/qualifications/essential-skills-wales/>

Employability

Skills, behaviours and personal attributes that would make an individual more likely to gain and sustain employment.

Estyn

Inspects quality and standards in education and training providers in Wales. They are responsible for inspecting:

- nursery schools and settings that are maintained by, or receive funding from, local authorities;
- primary schools;
- secondary schools;

Glossary of Terms

- special schools;
- pupil referral units;
- independent schools;
- further education;
- independent specialist colleges;
- adult community learning;
- local authority education services for children and young people;
- teacher education and training;
- work-based learning;
- careers companies; and
- offender learning.

In addition, they also:

- provide advice to the Welsh Government on quality and standards in education and training in Wales; and
- promote the spread of good practice in education and training.

For more information, visit www.estyn.gov.wales/language

European Social Fund (ESF)

European Union (EU) grant funding used to promote jobs, employment, skills and equality in the labour market.

National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW)

The Wales-wide membership body for work-based learning providers. Members range from small specialist training providers to national and international organisations, as well as Local Authorities, Further Education Institutions and charities. Members share good practice and physical resources, premises, etc.

Provider

An organisation that delivers training to learners through a Welsh Government funded programme. Providers can deliver these programmes as a contractor, consortium member or sub-contractor. In all instances they must satisfy all terms and conditions included in the relevant Programme Specification and associated guidance.

WEST

The Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST) is a diagnostic tool used to determine learners' levels of literacy, numeracy and digital literacy on entering post-16 learning. It is a mandatory assessment for full-time or substantive part-time learners. The system, hosted by Tribal Education, also provides online learning resources which are tailored to learners' individual skills needs.

Work-Based Learning

There is a network of 18 lead providers contracted to deliver WBL programmes. This network comprises a mixture of private companies, FE colleges, local authorities, third sector organisations and consortia. The programmes support employed and unemployed learners and include Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Work Ready programmes.

Annex A

Issues to be addressed	We Will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
MARKETING AND RAISING AWARENESS				
General lack of understanding amongst schools, individuals, carers and parents of the opportunities that apprenticeships can provide to people of all ages	Raise awareness of apprenticeship provision amongst individuals, parents, carers.	Targeted marketing campaigns using real case studies to ensure that disabled people feel that the Apprenticeships Programme is a viable route for them.	Welsh Government	2018/19
		Ensure that the website and materials promoting Apprenticeships are available in accessible formats and include messages and materials which are accessible to disabled people.	Welsh Government	2018/19
		Encourage more use of the Welsh Government's 'Have a Go' initiative' by disabled young people both in mainstream and specialist educational settings and Job Centres.	Welsh Government, Providers, Strategic Equality Lead, 'Have A Go' Board	2018/19
		Publish a Welsh version of Disability UK's 'Into Apprenticeships – The Guide for Disabled People'.	Welsh Government	2018/19

Issues to be addressed	We Will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
Employers are not always aware of the support that is available to them, or the benefits of a diverse workforce that includes employing disabled people. There is a need to break down pre-conceptions that employers may have around taking on a disabled apprentice.	Promote to employers the support available to disabled people entering into apprenticeships.	Increase employers' awareness of the support available to them through targeted marketing campaigns such as promoting the Department for Work and Pensions' Access to Work Programme ¹ and Mental Health Access to Work helpline, which is accessible to employers/employees throughout the UK. National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW) Development Managers, Apprenticeship Providers, Apprenticeship Levy employer engagement, Apprenticeship Matching Service to relay key messages around support available for disabled people entering into apprenticeships.	Welsh Government Business Wales/ Working Advice Wales NTfW/Welsh Government/Providers	Ongoing
		Scope out the possibility of developing a benchmarking tool, similar to Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index. This is a benchmarking tool for employers to measure their progress on LGBTQ+ ² inclusion.	Welsh Government	2019/20
	Celebrate diversity on the apprenticeship programme regularly throughout the year.	Identify role models and utilise them as ambassadors during Apprenticeship Week. Release case studies with a focus on protected characteristics at least once per year. Identify national initiatives such as International Day of Disabled People and ensure that we use social media and other engagement methods to promote them.	NTfW/Welsh Government	Ongoing

¹The Department for Work and Pensions' Access to Work programme: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>
²LGBTQ+ is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning and others.

Issues to be addressed	We Will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
FLEXIBILITY OF ENTRY AND EXIT CRITERIA				
Many disabled people do not work 16 hours when they enter employment so the minimum 16-hour eligibility requirement ³ could act as a barrier.	Explore options regarding how we can modify apprenticeship criteria to ensure flexibility to meet the needs of all apprentices whilst ensuring that the apprentice is still able to train to the required level to be employment competent in that particular sector. Areas to be explored further and modified are: The 16 hour requirement – consider how to introduce a phased approach. Gradually building up to 16 hours over a set period of time. Essential Skills - consider how the level of Essential Skills qualifications can be adapted to match ability and needs of disabled people to allow them to progress to sector requirements.	Set up an internal Welsh Government group to review the current system. Liaise with providers and NTfW Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead to ensure modifications are only used where applicable to maintain the quality of the Apprenticeships brand.	Welsh Government/ NTfW/Provider network/Essential Skills Working Group	2019/20
The Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST) and Essential Skills ⁴ qualification requirements in Apprenticeships may act as a barrier particularly for people with dyslexia/dyspraxia. It is possible for an individual to become vocationally skilled without requiring high levels of literacy and numeracy skills. Essential Skills requirements should be contextualised against the individual needs of apprentices rather than generally.				

³Apprentices need to be employed for at least 16 hours per week.

⁴Essential Skills: Essential Skills qualifications are designed to assess the skills that learners need for successful learning, employment and life. Essential Skills provides a single ladder of progression from Entry Level 1 to Level 3 in Essential Communication Skills.

Issues to be addressed	We Will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
DATA AND DISCLOSURE				
Currently our data on the number of disabled apprentices is based on self-declaration. Apprentices may be reluctant to declare an impairment or health condition for fear of losing their job.	Review our processes to encourage apprentices to disclose an impairment or health condition; creating a supportive, safe environment for apprentices who do make this declaration.	Commission research into our current data collection processes and consider whether there is a need to redefine our definition of disability as they have done in England and Scotland. Need to ascertain the extent of under-reporting.	Welsh Government	
Assessment of people's needs and disclosure is not a one-off event. Support needs to be continuous and not just provided at the beginning. Recognise that peoples' needs change as they leave the school environment and in adulthood.		Review the questions that are currently asked of an apprentice. Declaring an impairment or health condition needs to be seen as positive - the questions asked need to be positive encouraging people to be open, e.g. how can we support you?	Welsh Government/ NTfW Equality and Diversity Lead	



Issues to be addressed	We will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS				
In order to ensure that apprenticeships are inclusive and person-centred we need to ensure that the right support is identified and then put in place. This is not a one-size fits all approach.	In conjunction with our provider network and the network of disability support services, we will develop individualised support packages. Through Work Advice Wales, we will improve assessment processes prior to starting Apprenticeships and other Working Wales programmes to identify barriers. We will ensure that where barriers are identified they are followed up with individualised support.	Consider the possibility of providing funding for job coach/mentor for apprentices with a disability to provide the additional support needed. Ensure that the Additional Learning Support Fund⁵ provides support for apprentices' individual needs and can be effectively used by providers working in partnership with disability support organisations.	Welsh Government	2019/20
The Pre-Apprenticeship offer is crucial for disabled people to ensure that our routes into apprenticeships are inclusive.	Improve routes into apprenticeships for disabled people through programmes such as Working Wales and research options for developing an inclusive "pre-apprenticeship" programme, which does not duplicate existing provision.	Pilot an inclusive Pre-Apprenticeship programme for disabled people and people with health conditions who request support; so they can receive the support and training they need to be able to move on to an apprenticeship. This should include adaptations they need as well as emotional and psychological support via a job coach/mentor or independent advocate.	Welsh Government	

⁵Additional Learning Support (ALS) Fund – A Welsh Government fund that provides additional funding to facilitate the ALS that some learners require to effectively overcome their barriers to accessing learning and training. Providers should use ALS funding to respond to individual learner needs. ALS funding can be utilised to cover either human or technical support.

Issues to be addressed	We will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
INFLUENCING EMPLOYERS				
Employers may need more encouragement to take on disabled apprentices. The will is there but many employers do not know how to.	Encourage employers who take on apprentices to sign up to DWP Disability Confident scheme or any subsequent Wales focussed scheme, which may be developed, as part of activity contributing towards an increase in the number of disabled people employed as part of the delivery of the Employability Plan.	Produce employer focussed guides promoting the benefits of employing a disabled apprentice with instructions on how to become Disability Confident. Signpost free resources and guidance. Signpost financial support available. Hold free events in conjunction with Equality and Human Rights Commission to promote the benefits of a diverse workforce.	Welsh Government	
In conjunction with our provider network and the network of disability support services, we will develop support packages for employers to assist them with employing disabled apprentices.	Promote inclusive recruitment procedures to employers through our provider network Consider non-fiscal methods of motivating employers to recruit disabled apprentices.	Carry out a review of incentives that are used in the other UK nations and make a recommendation regarding an appropriate incentive scheme for Wales. The new Apprenticeship Finders within Careers Wales will search new apprenticeship opportunities that are not already advertised on the Apprenticeship Matching Service, in their search they will also identify apprenticeship opportunities for disabled people.	Welsh Government Careers Wales	

Issues to be addressed	We Will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
ENSURING PROVIDER ENGAGEMENT				
The number of disabled learners that are recruited onto apprenticeships by providers is low.	Continue to influence, monitor and motivate providers to drive recruitment of disabled individuals.	Review of Additional Learning Needs support to encourage providers to use it more effectively. Promote the Welsh Government's Equality and Diversity Toolkit⁶ via the Equality and Diversity Champion. Introduce percentage increase targets for apprenticeship providers to increase the number of disabled people in apprenticeships – these would be contextualised and supported by other actions. Strengthen monitoring arrangements. Providers will need to demonstrate that they are increasing the number of disabled learners on the programme and how they are supporting them. Ensure that providers are aware of support mechanisms and how to access them so that they can develop individualised support for disabled apprentices in partnership with disability support organisations. Providers to report on how many learners with protected characteristics they have recruited as part of their community benefits return. Explore opportunities for Estyn to introduce monitoring of recruitment and support for disabled learners under the Wellbeing section of the Inspection report.	Welsh Government Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead Welsh Government Welsh Government Welsh Government/ Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead Welsh Government Welsh Government Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead	2019/20 2018/19 2018/19 2019/20 2018/19 2019/20 2019/20 2018/19
Apprenticeship providers should adopt the Social Model of disability as the Welsh Government has done.	Promote the Social model of disability to all apprenticeship providers.	NTfW Strategic Equality and Diversity Lead to promote the Social Model amongst all providers and provide advice and guidance on how they can adopt it.		

Issues to be addressed	We Will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
PARTNERSHIP WORKING				
There is a disconnect between other employment/training programmes for disabled people and the Apprenticeships Programme.	Encourage and facilitate collaborative working between apprenticeship providers and specialist disability and employment organisations.	Identify opportunities for joint working. Continue to work with specialist organisations leading to a more formalised approach. Providers to be encouraged to utilise national initiatives that already exist to build up their capacity and knowledge of issues relating to disabled people.	Welsh Government, Support organisations, Providers	2018/19
Apprenticeship policy makers need to consult with specialist organisations on a regular basis to ensure that decision-making is inclusive.	Ensure that our programme specification promotes inclusivity and is reviewed by the Inclusive Apprenticeships Working Group. Inclusive Apprenticeships Working Group to be continued to monitor and review the Disability Action Plan on a regular basis.	Develop an Inclusive Apprenticeships Programme specification, which requires providers to formalise partnership arrangements with support organisations. Agree a terms of reference for the Inclusive Apprenticeships Working Group	Inclusive Apprenticeships Working Group	2018/19

Issues to be addressed	We Will:	How will we do this?	Responsible Partners	Year
CAREER JOURNEY				
	Raise awareness amongst external stakeholders of Careers Wales commitment to equality and diversity. Continue to work with young people, helping them make successful transitions from education to training and potential employment, as well as helping people of all ages to follow their career and learning goals	Careers Wales will distribute their Equality and Diversity policy to key external stakeholders of organisations committed to Equality and Diversity for comment, e.g. Stonewall, Disability Wales, etc. Careers Wales will continue to ask for feedback from their customers to explore ways that they can improve. The new Apprenticeship Finders within Careers Wales will search new apprenticeship opportunities that are not already advertised on the Apprenticeship Matching Service, in their search they will also search for and promote apprenticeship opportunities for disabled customers.	Careers Wales	2018/19

Annex B

This document sets the political context behind the Welsh Government's Inclusive Apprenticeship – Disability Action Plan 2018 - 2021

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The actions of the Welsh Government must be compatible with international obligations, as set out in section 82 of the Government of Wales Act 2006, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The UNCRPD is an international treaty which promotes, protects and ensures the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by disabled people. The articles of the Convention cover a wide range of areas including accessibility, independent living, education, health, and work and employment.

With regard to independent living, Article 19 (Living independently and being included in the community) includes reference:

- to disabled people having an equal right to live in and take part in the community;
- to disabled people having the right to the same choice and control as non-disabled people;
- that Governments recognise that disabled people should have these rights.

In August 2017, the United Kingdom was examined by the United Nations on its compliance

with the Convention. Representatives from the Welsh Government travelled to Geneva for the examination, which was led by the UN Committee on the Rights of Disabled People. Over two days the Committee scrutinised the United Kingdom's implementation of the Convention and highlighted several areas of concern where improvement is needed.

The UN Committee published its Concluding Observations following the examination. This includes recommendations to improve the human rights situation for disabled people living in the UK. There were no specific recommendations for the Welsh Government, although there were a number of general recommendations to take forward in Wales.

The Social Model of Disability
The Social Model of Disability is enshrined in the UNCRPD and has been adopted by the Welsh Government. The Social Model makes an important distinction between 'impairment' and 'disability'. It recognises that people with impairments are disabled by barriers that commonly exist in society. These barriers include negative attitudes, and physical and organisational barriers, which can prevent disabled people's inclusion and participation in all walks of life.

- According to the social model of disability, impairment is what has historically been referred to as a "disability" or a health

condition. For many (but not all) disabled people, their impairment is a significant part of their life and may form part of their personal identity. For some people, their impairment may require considerable management and they may need ongoing medical support. Experience of impairment is personal. Everyone's experience is different. That experience is always valid and always important.

- Disability by contrast is the inequality, disadvantage, disempowerment or discrimination which may affect people with impairments as a result of barriers to access and inclusion. For example, a staircase is a barrier to a wheelchair user; providing a lift removes that barrier. Just a few other examples of barriers include the lack of British Sign Language (BSL) or a loop system, the lack of braille, large print or audio information, the lack of flexible and part time working opportunities, the lack of appropriate social care or lack of understanding of mental health issues or autistic spectrum disorder. Disability is therefore something which affects people with impairments but is different from impairment. Disability is something which disables someone with an impairment. Barriers can be removed. If you remove the barrier then you remove the disability.

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The UNCRDP states that “disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”. If fully realised, the Social Model would transform society, removing barriers and meaning that disabled people would be able to participate fully in society.

The historic approach to disability in the UK has been based on the Medical Model of Disability (in which a person’s impairment is seen to be the thing which disables them). This means that adopting the Social Model of Disability requires a fundamental shift in our attitude, culture and how we work.

By adopting an approach based on barrier removal – and working with disabled people to identify solutions – we can create better policy and better services for everyone. The Welsh Government is committed to making this cultural shift but acknowledges that work will be required over time to ensure that all aspects of our work are brought fully in line with the Social Model of Disability. The barriers that people face

The vast majority of barriers that disabled people face can be broadly categorised in to one of the following areas

Attitudinal barriers

The attitudes of individual people can help to create

the barriers people face. The decisions you make, the language you use, and your behaviour can either create or remove barriers. Attitudinal barriers can affect all aspects of disabled people’s participation in society.

In addition, actions which (even unintentionally) isolate or exclude disabled people can cause significant adverse impact on mental health and personal well-being.

Institutional barriers

Policies and procedures can prevent the full participation of disabled people within education, the workplace and the wider community, whether or not that is their intention. Examples of policies which support the full participation of disabled people may include policies on reasonable adjustments and opportunities for part time and flexible education or employment. The lack of such policies, or the failure to implement them, can cause significant barriers to equality.

Communication barriers

There are many types of communication barriers – for example, the use of inaccessible language, failure to provide a British Sign Language interpreter or information in alternative formats or placing signage at a level too high for wheelchair users.

Communication barriers affect all aspects of disabled

people’s lives. For example, if information boards at train stations are not accompanied by audio announcements, people with sight loss may not be aware of platform changes, causing them to miss their train. This compromises their ability to travel, limiting their equality and their ability to arrive on time for education, appointments or employment.

Environmental barriers

The more obvious examples of environmental barriers include failure to provide full and appropriate building access to wheelchair users. Examples of less obvious barriers include not thinking about how disabled people would get to a venue for a meeting, designing rooms with minimal contrast making it hard for people who are blind or partially sighted or have Usher syndrome to take full part in any activities in those rooms or being unaware of the need for some disabled people to have reduced light or noise levels.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC is an international agreement that protects the human rights of children under the age of 18. It was ratified by the UN General Assembly in 1989. In 1991 the United Kingdom formally agreed to ensure that every child in the UK has all the rights listed in the convention. The Welsh Government has used the Convention as the basis for policy making for children and young people in Wales since

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2004. There are 54 articles in the Convention. Articles 1-42 set out how children should be treated while Articles 43-45 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children are entitled to their rights.

Article 23 provides that children who have any kind of disability should have special care and support so that they can lead full and independent lives.

In 2011 Wales became the first country in the UK to incorporate children's rights into domestic law with the introduction of the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011. The Measure embeds the UNCRC and the optional protocols into Welsh law through a requirement being placed on specified bodies to have regard to the Convention when carrying out functions.

The Measure requires the Welsh Ministers to consider children's rights when exercising any of their functions. The Children's Rights Scheme 2014 sets out the arrangements that are in place to comply with this duty and reflects our on-going commitment to children's rights.

Equality Act 2010

Public Sector Equality Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 sets out the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). In summary this places a duty on public bodies to have due regard in exercising their functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Building on the Act itself, distinctive Welsh Regulations laid a further foundation for taking equality forward in Wales. Under these Regulations, listed bodies must prepare and publish equality objectives every four years. In developing their equality objectives, authorities must involve people who represent the interests of people who share one or more of the protected characteristics and have an interest in the way that the authority carries out its functions.

Taken together, these statutory requirements provide a basis for local scrutiny and challenge, and for public bodies to work in partnership with disabled people to improve local services. It also provides a way of identifying particular needs or patterns of disadvantage and coming up with workable solutions to address them.

Duty to Make Reasonable Adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 also provides that employers and service providers have a duty,

by means of making reasonable adjustments, to remove disadvantages faced by disabled people, in order to ensure that disabled people can access jobs, education and services as easily as non-disabled people. This is known as the 'duty to make reasonable adjustments'. This duty applies to the Welsh Government itself as well as public services in Wales. This duty effectively complements the Social Model of Disability and can cover, for example:

- Ensuring communications and information are accessible to everyone;
- Introducing more flexible organisational practices;
- Removing or reducing physical barriers in the environment; or
- Providing aids or equipment to support an employee to do their job.

What is reasonable can depend on a number of factors, but the aim should be, as far as possible, to remove or reduce any substantial disadvantage faced by a disabled person as compared with a non-disabled person.