



**DYFODOL  
DISGLAIR  
BRIGHTER  
FUTURES**

# Careers Wales

## Operational Plan 2021-22



**Gyrfa Cymru  
Careers Wales**

## Executive Summary

2021-22 marks the first year of Brighter Futures, Careers Wales' new five-year strategy for delivering a 'world class' careers service for the people of Wales. Developed through consultation with a diverse range of stakeholders, it is a strategy which is truly centred around the needs of customers.

Brighter Futures has been developed during what has been one of the most challenging years the nation has witnessed. Careers Wales has not been immune to those challenges but now stands ready to play a crucial role in the nation's economic recovery; guiding Welsh citizens to make informed decisions about their future career pathways, supporting people into work, self-employment, education and training and helping Wales to Build Back Better.

Evidence shows young people are being disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Their education, employment and training opportunities have changed dramatically, and this will have an impact on their short and long-term prospects. Brighter Futures will offer a personalised service, targeting support at those most likely to face barriers to moving into a sustained positive transition from statutory education. It will mean that young people and their parents will be more aware of the opportunities available to them in the future economy of Wales. And the vision ensures that support will continue into the Post Compulsory Education Sector and, for the first time, reach into primary schools, helping to ensure that young people start to think about careers from an earlier age.

Support for schools to drive up the quality of their Careers Work Related Experience (CWRE) provision will be enhanced with the introduction of a new Careers Wales Quality Award. Connecting young people with employers will continue to be an important goal for Careers Wales, playing a fundamental role in helping young people understand the wide range of opportunities they can move into in the future and helping to develop a talent pipeline for Wales.

Brighter Futures ensures a seamless flow through to Working Wales, offering a service which supports adults to fulfil their potential and overcome barriers through careers coaching and guidance and providing Wales with a clear careers service offer from primary school all the way to adulthood.

Careers Wales will continue its journey of digital transformation over the next five years, introducing not just the technological changes that will deliver a personalised, customer-centred, adaptive and agile service, but cultural change within the organisation in a commitment to make best use of the technology available to better meet the needs of customers and support the aims of Digital 2030.

The four high-level strategic goals and accompanying strategic outcomes for Brighter Futures are articulated clearly in this Operational Plan, along with the Key Performance Indicators for 2021-22. Careers Wales looks forward to delivering on these outcomes for the people of Wales.



Nikki Lawrence  
CEO, Careers Wales

## Services to Young People

Careers Wales' offer for young people in education in 2021-22 will be a personalised service delivered in collaboration with schools, colleges, EOTAS providers and other partners and influencers, including parents. It will involve all key stakeholders, ensuring that our work is integrated, preventative and focussed on a balance between the short and long-term needs of customers. The service will be focused on:

- broadening horizons;
- raising their awareness of the skills required in the modern labour market;
- development of the key skills for career planning, both short and long-term;
- support at key transition points for young people that need it.

Work at Key Stage 4 will be targeted, with customers allocated to one of three levels of support, thus ensuring that our resources deployed in line with customer need.

- Level One - universal support for those young people who will self-help through our digital and social media platforms and attend group sessions<sup>1</sup>.
- Level Two - one to one support for those young people identified as in need of guidance and coaching support.
- Level Three – targeted support for those young people whose characteristics can lead to them being underrepresented in Education, Employment or Training post-statutory education.

Support in education will continue in Post-16 settings with support primarily focussed on those learners identified as being at risk of not completing their Post-16 course of learning and those who self-refer through the What Next survey. For those young people who decide to leave education at 16 and enter a job or training, support will be available via the Working Wales service.

## Services to Stakeholders

For the first time this year Careers Wales support will be extended to primary schools through a virtual CWRE week. This will help to promote longer term career planning and a preventative approach by encouraging young people to start thinking about the world of work at an earlier age.

In secondary schools, Careers Wales's Business Engagement Advisers (BEAs) will facilitate a wide range of workplace experiences<sup>2</sup> to support young people to make effective career decisions, thereby complimenting the work of Careers Advisers as part of an integrated team approach. The team will analyse Career Check and other data to assess the type of employer engagement required by schools, and BEAs will work with key stakeholders to ensure that work is targeted and focused on key regional priority sectors.

To support the delivery of effective Careers and Work-Related Experience (CWRE) programmes<sup>3</sup> by schools, Careers and World of Work Coordinators (CWOWs) will provide CWRE related professional

<sup>1</sup> Group sessions for all groups are planned to be delivered from September onwards, though individual circumstances for schools to return after the current lockdown will vary and may allow for some delivery.

<sup>2</sup> It is assumed that employer engagement work will be entirely digitally focused until September 2021.

<sup>3</sup> It is assumed that CWOW work will be entirely digitally focused until September 2021.

learning for relevant teachers / lecturers in schools and Further Education Institutions (FEIs) through training and consultancy sessions. They will develop centralised and bespoke CWRE resources, and support institutions to achieve the Careers Wales Mark. The work of CWOWs is focused on improving careers programmes in the longer term and therefore supports a preventative approach by trying to ensure that young people are better prepared to make effective career decisions through high-quality careers education. This year for the first time the offer of CWOW support will extend into primary schools. 2021/22 will be an important 'development' year for the CWOW team with the production and introduction of a new CWRE award and a more formal, revised professional learning offer. Delivery will be a blended approach of face-to-face and digital.

## Digital and Communications

Careers Wales is committed to delivering customer-centred services that are responsive to the needs of users. The Careers Wales website will continue to be developed with a new course search application, a new customer profile and log in, job information and trends, an enhanced education business exchange and new website search function. The introduction of a new customer relationship management (CRM) system will be a key element in developing new, personalised marketing content and activities and improved stakeholder engagement and communications. A new contact centre will be introduced that will integrate with the new CRM, improving the customer experience and creating opportunities for new digital channels where it can add value to the customer journey.

High profile national campaigns such as Start Your Story, Stop Don't Drop and Choose Your Future will continue to run and the digital team will continue to lead on the development and delivery of online activities and resources including support for virtual events and open days, resources and video content to engage audiences.

## Working Wales

The Working Wales service is an integral part of the Careers Wales offer. It is subject to a separate agreement with the Welsh Government and is therefore not covered in this Operational Plan. It is worth noting, however, that the offer of support to unemployed young people and adults to make successful and positive transitions into suitable opportunities means that Careers Wales now delivers a seamless, all-age careers service for the people of Wales, from primary school to adulthood.

## Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

Brighter Futures will be implemented in accordance with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 five principles of working:

- equipping our customers with the skills they need to plan their careers in the long-term;
- developing the skills vital to making effective career choices, helping to prevent customers dropping-out of education, employment or training;
- increasing integration with key stakeholders to improve employment outcomes for the people of Wales
- encouraging collaboration across the sector to share good practice, experience and expertise;

- promoting the involvement of Careers Wales employees, customers, parents/carers, influencers and stakeholders in service design, development and evaluation.

Brighter Futures supports all of the seven wellbeing goals:

- supporting better access to the labour market for a more prosperous Wales;
- helping to create a more equal Wales where people are inspired to be the best they can;
- contributing to the health and wellbeing benefits that come with better access to opportunities in education, employment and training;
- building resilience in our customers to overcome any barriers they are facing;
- working with role models to show how the economy can help drive a globally responsible Wales;
- promoting the value of Welsh language skills in the labour market;
- working in the heart of communities and contributing to more cohesive communities.

## Welsh Language

Delivering a truly bilingual service for the people of Wales is enshrined in Goal 1 of Brighter Futures. Careers Wales will continue to deliver and report annually on its Welsh Language Standards.

Careers Wales will continue to contribute and respond to the Welsh Government's Cymraeg 2050 aim of achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050 across its functions, emphasising the value of Welsh language skills in its work with individuals, via group sessions, 'Welsh in the Workplace' employer events and marketing campaigns. The company will also work with colleagues in Welsh Government, Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the National Training Federation for Wales to support the delivery of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol's Further Education and Apprenticeship Welsh-medium Action Plan.

## The Strategic Goals

**Goal 1: To provide a bilingual, inclusive and impartial careers guidance and coaching service for the people of Wales.**

### Strategic Outcome 1:

Support young people and adults to make positive transitions into education, employment or training, including apprenticeships and understand the skills required to succeed in the labour market and contribute to the future economy of Wales.

#### Key Stage 3 (Years 8 and 9)

- Work will focus on broadening horizons and raising the aspirations of young people. Buzz Quiz and Job Matching Quiz will be available to all young people.
- Group sessions will be offered to mainstream and special school. They will choose from: Skills for the Future, Gender Stereotyping, Options Choices, 'Bilingual Skills in the workplace'.
- Guidance and coaching support will be offered to young people who have been identified as statemented and those who self-refer for support with their option choices.

#### Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11)

- Support for young people will focus on supporting them to make informed and effective decisions. Group sessions in Year 10 will have a focus on Labour Market Information and group sessions in Year 11 will focus on Post 16 options, including apprenticeships.
- Guidance and coaching interviews will be delivered to young people identified through Career Check for a number of reasons<sup>4</sup>. Digital support will be available for those not identified as needing one-to-one support (approximately 40% of cohort). All Year 11 young people will be contacted by their Careers Adviser.

#### Post-16 Education

- Our offer will focus on supporting effective transition into learning and work. All 6<sup>th</sup> forms and FE campus will be offered a digital presentation on Post-18 Options. Guidance and coaching will be provided to those who seek support having completed the What Next survey.

**KPI 95% of pupils who receive a guidance and coaching service enter education, employment or training on leaving school.**

<sup>4</sup> Unfocussed, seeking an apprenticeship, talented but underachieving, labour market entrant, lacking in confidence or motivation to make things happen, unrealistic.

## Strategic Outcome 2:

Customers who have benefitted from enhanced levels of support make positive transitions into appropriate provision.

### Targeted Support in Education

- Careers Wales' targeted offer will provide additional support in Year 11 to those young people in statutory education (estimated at 30% of the cohort) who are in groups that are under-represented<sup>5</sup> in education, employment, and training. All will be offered a guidance and coaching interview, the distance travelled will be measured during the year.

### Home Educated Young People

- Guidance and coaching support will be offered to all known young people who are educated at home.

### Activate (ESF funded project, ends March 2023)

- Continue to deliver in partnership with Local Authorities, providing one-to-one mentoring support, group interactions and preparation work for entering Tailored Work Experience.

### Post 16 education.

- All young people deemed 'at risk' of not sustaining their place (Tier 4) in EET will be provided with ongoing support during their first 6 months in EET.

### Support for ALN young people in schools (Statements and Statement Equivalent)

- Provide the following support to young people in special schools and those who are statemented in mainstream schools: Guidance and coaching interviews from Year 9 through to Year 14; Attendance at transition reviews from Year 9 through to Year 14; Completion of Learning and Skills plans; LSP reviews; Specialist college reviews; Completion of Specialist Funding Applications.

### Young people 16-17 in the labour market (NEETs)

- Responsibility for the provision of support for Tier 3 customers (Unemployed 16 and 17-year-olds who are NEET but actively seeking EET) sits with Careers/Working Wales. Support is also offered to those Tier 1 (Young people whose whereabouts have become Unknown) and Tier 2 customers (Unemployed 16 and 17-year-olds, who are not available or unable to access EET) referred to us by the Youth Service or other agency nominated by the local authority Engagement and Progression Coordinator. The offer for young people in the labour market is aimed at supporting them to make informed and effective decisions in order to enter or re-enter the labour market.

<sup>5</sup> Free School Meal eligible, Looked After Children, EOTAS (PRU and Alternative Curriculum), At Risk of Becoming NEET, Young Carers, School Action+, Poor Attenders.

### Supporting Young People in the Secure Estates

- We will work with Youth Justice Board and the Welsh Government to support young people who are placed in secure estates in Wales by: supporting them with a plan for their release and ensure successful progression; making contact with the young person or their Youth Justice worker within 10 days of the notification of release; and offering a blend of support incorporating group sessions, interviews, signposting and referral to appropriate employment, education or training.

**KPI 85% of young people who receive targeted support enter EET on leaving school.**

### Strategic Outcome 3:

Raise customer awareness of EET and other progression opportunities.

- Opportunity Awareness is a key skill for effective career planning and is a feature of one-to-one guidance and coaching interviews, group sessions and employer events.
- Customers will be informed of job, sector and regional LMI in Wales through the Careers Wales website which will also facilitate current live opportunities available in Wales.

**KPI 90% of young people in education report raised awareness of opportunities.**

### Strategic Outcome 4:

Improve access to the benefits of careers guidance and coaching support through collaboration and engagement with partners and influencers.

- Partnership Agreements will be agreed with every institution where Careers Wales delivers its services.
- Career Wales will collaborate with local authorities and parent groups supporting those young people educated at home and national partners such as National Deaf Children Society and Young Carers Wales to develop services.

#### Work with Parents/Carers

- Careers Wales will engage with parents/carers to widen access to services through attendance at parents' evenings; presentations at Year 6 Transition events; follow up contact with parents/carers; termly updates for parents/carers shared through school and college platforms to include information on future labour market careers and learning pathways; marketing campaigns that target parents/carers/carers.

**KPI Partnership Agreements with 100% of partner organisations that enable improved access to the benefits of careers guidance and coaching.**



**Goal 2: To develop our work with employers, training providers and entrepreneurs to understand their skills requirements and opportunities for young people and adults.**

**Strategic Outcome 5:**

Inform and motivate young people about the world of work through engagement with employers and role models.

**Primary Schools – Introduction to CWRE**

- Careers Wales will deliver a virtual CWRE week available to all primary schools during February 2022 to include a range of digital employer sessions such as webinars, live Q&A, panel discussions, pre-recorded videos. A series of ‘day in the life’ style video content to introduce a range of careers to children of primary school age will also be produced.

**Secondary Schools**

- Careers Wales’ offer to schools is aimed at broadening horizons and raise aspirations (KS3) and making informed and effective career decisions (KS4). This offer will consist of a virtual CWRE week during July 2021; high quality, sector-based webinars or live employer presentations; high impact ‘Choose Your Future’ careers fairs; a digital version of the Choose Your Future events; continuation of the existing digital offer up to July 2021; a World of Work carousel day in KS3 and KS4; two employer presentations and/or employer site visits.

**Activate**

- Activate related employer engagement activity in the form of presentations, site visits and tailored work experience in KS4 where appropriate will be delivered in secondary schools, special schools and PRUs.

**Special schools / PRUs**

- An offer of bespoke employer engagement support will be made to all special schools and PRUs.

**Support for employers**

- Valued Partner Awards will be facilitated via a social media celebration week in May 2021 and a live celebration event in November 2021, restrictions allowing. The employer e-learning resource will continue to be offered to employers.

**Digital and Communications**

- 2021-22 will see the deployment of a new Education Business Exchange on the Careers Wales website and the production of a series of role model videos.

**KPI CW facilitates at least one employer engagement event in 95% of secondary schools in Wales.**



**Strategic Outcome 6:**

Raise young people's awareness of the skills required by economic priority sectors and how they link to the curriculum.

- Schools will be offered bespoke group sessions to highlight growth sectors. Work will take place with RLSPs to ensure that employer engagement events reflect the priority sectors across Wales.
- A new job trends application for the Careers Wales website will be developed that will include spotlights on priority sectors.

**KPI** 80% of customers reported that they have a raised awareness of the skills required by economic priority sectors.

**Goal 3: To support delivery of the curriculum for Wales and contribute to the achievement of the four purposes.**

**Strategic Outcome 7:**

Enhance the capacity of schools and Careers Leaders to deliver CWRE within the Curriculum for Wales.

**Careers Wales Mark and new CWRE award**

- The existing Mark will be replaced by a new award during the business plan year and offered to primary and secondary schools. Providers signed up to the existing award will have until December 2021 to complete.

**Professional Learning**

- CWOWs will continue to offer secondary schools and FEIs training and one-to-one consultancy on a range of key topics between April and July 2021.
- A revised Professional Learning offer will be publicised from September 2021 onwards via regional consortia, Educators Wales etc. The offer will be available for teachers across the 3-16 age range and will be linked directly to the new curriculum and CWRE statutory guidance. Careers Wales will work with a range of partners to support the development of professional learning.

**CWRE Resources**

- Careers Wales has developed a range of CWRE resources, including 'Careers City' for primary teachers, and will continue to populate the Careers Wales section of Hwb.

**KPI** Training or consultancy support to improve CWRE programmes is delivered to teachers in 65% of the secondary schools in Wales.



**Goal 4: To develop a skilled, engaged and agile Careers Wales workforce and enable the delivery of high performing, customer-centred services.**

**Strategic Outcome 8:**

Deliver personalised, customer-centred services, enhanced by technology, responsive to user needs and accessible to all.

- Increased innovation will be reflected in our offer across all areas of work in 2021-22. Developments include: developing innovative, digital services and content for customers including virtual events, online jobs fairs, podcasts and webinars; providing an effective customer contact centre and helpline service enabled by the introduction of new omni-channel digital services; increasing the reach and engagement on company social media channels; using the new CRM to develop more sophisticated personalised digital marketing; developing a personalised experience for customers on the website.

**KPI 85% of customers report that their needs were met by an online service.**

**Strategic Outcome 9:**

Create a highly skilled, engaged, diverse and agile Careers Wales workforce.

- The company will deliver training in using new technologies; training in Agile project methodology for all staff; themed wellbeing strands to enhance engagement; diversity work enhancements.
- The company will undertake a behavioural and role competencies project to improve management and team effectiveness; review and restructure company working patterns/working hours structure post pandemic to aid agility; introduce employee voice project to enhance engagement, purpose and ownership; review role structure to test fitness for purpose; introduce a union social partnership to enhance industrial relations; improve staffing forecasting; review learning time model and coaching approach; develop links between learning and performance to demonstrate impact on improving levels of support for customers.
- The company will continue to train and accredit its trainee Careers Advisers and Employability Coaches, ensuring they are provided with a learning environment that mixes practical workplace learning & experience, support from peer mentors and academic learning.

**KPI 100% of trainee careers advisers successfully complete their level 6 diploma Career Guidance and Development within the two years allocated.  
75% of employees report positive levels of engagement with the company.**

**Strategic Outcome 10:**

Optimise our use of technology to transform our ways of working and develop the digital skills and capabilities of all Careers Wales employees.

- Careers Advisers will provide their guidance and coaching support in a blended way maximising the use of video interviews and live streaming group sessions. Early pilots using an online booking system for parent appointments will also be put in place.
- The new CRM system, Atlas, and HR system, Pobl, will continue the digital transformation of our internal processes.

**KPI Improvement in the digital skills and capabilities of Careers Wales employees.**



### **Strategic Outcome 11:**

Inform our strategy, policy and service developments through customer insight, business intelligence, data and analytics.

- Careers Wales will raise awareness and understanding of its services to key stakeholders/influencers through public relations activity; use Google and social media analytics and user research techniques to inform the development and continuous improvement of services and content; engage with key customer groups, stakeholders and influencers to measure how well informed and aware they are of Careers Wales services; continue to run ongoing customer feedback surveys that highlight key customer insights and any areas for improvement or expansion.
- During the first half year a feasibility study will take place to assess the potential for Careers Wales data to be linked to a range of other data sets and develop a 'Data Hub' so that company data can be analysed to inform delivery going forward and contribute to wider policy-making.

