



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

www.cymru.gov.uk



Developing apprenticeships for the Welsh economy



Consultation for young people



Wales has one of the best apprenticeship systems in the UK.

An apprenticeship is a way to earn a wage and work alongside experienced staff to learn job-specific skills. Apprentices are employed while they learn and get qualifications.

Apprenticeships can be at:

Level 2 – Foundation Apprenticeships
(like GCSE grade A–C)

Level 3 – Apprenticeships
(like A level)

Level 4 – Higher Apprenticeships
(like first year degree)

For every £1 we spend on apprenticeships, it makes £18 for the Welsh economy.

Apprenticeships play an important part in keeping and growing a skilled workforce in Wales and they help tackle youth unemployment too.

In Wales the latest figures show that we have more than 51,000 apprentices working to get qualifications and skills this way.

The Welsh Government wants apprenticeships to be the best they can be so they meet the needs of young people and employers today and in the future. This includes making sure that there are enough apprenticeships in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Vision

We want an apprenticeship system that:

- helps the Welsh economy grow and drive forward
- meets the needs of the economy today and in the future
- gives young people opportunities to change their lives for the better.

We want an apprenticeship system that is highly thought of by employers, parents/carers and others as a real option for young people to get skills, qualifications and employment.



This booklet tells you about changes we want to make to the apprenticeship system and we want to know what you think.





Reasons

We want to make these changes because:

- the economy is changing and businesses need apprentices trained at higher levels
- the focus of apprenticeships has been at Level 2 (Foundation Apprenticeships) which doesn't often lead to well-paid jobs
- we want to encourage more people aged 16–19 to take up apprenticeships
- employers in Wales who run apprenticeships could benefit from becoming more involved in how they are developed or designed
- there are not enough Level 3 apprenticeships in STEM
- the apprenticeship system in England is changing and being replaced with new apprenticeship standards designed by employers.

This means that apprenticeships in England won't be the same as Wales and might not be transferred between jobs as easily.

This could cause problems for employers that work across the UK and young people who want to move in or out of Wales.



Question

What do think of apprenticeships?

Comment



These are the changes we want to make:

1

We want apprenticeships to be strong and suitable for employers and for learners.

The best apprenticeships systems:

- have everyone working together in partnership
- are designed to meet the needs of employers.

So, we think that employers should be more involved in the design and development of apprenticeship frameworks from the beginning. However, the needs of young people and the growth of the economy will continue to be an important part of all new apprenticeship designs.

An **apprenticeship framework** is a plan of all the stages you have to complete to pass the apprenticeship.



2

We want to refocus apprenticeship programmes.

We want to make sure people have as many ways as possible to get a job and be employed.

Sometimes people who are already in work, are starting apprenticeships that make little difference to their job opportunities. Now that our resources are stretched, we need to look at whether this is the best use of money.

We want to change the focus so that government-funded apprenticeships are only available to people who have a new job, or role in their job, that they need to gain new skills and learning for. This will help people to develop their careers and get better jobs in future.

?

Question

Do you think this is a good idea?

Yes No Don't know

Comment

?

Question

Do you think this is a good idea?

Yes No Don't know

Comment

3

We want more Welsh-medium apprenticeships.

We want to make sure that young people can get their work training in Welsh if they want to.

We want to work with employers and other providers that design apprenticeships to make sure that this happens.

4

We want apprenticeships to be a Level 3+ achievement.

There are many apprenticeships that start at Level 2 (Foundation Apprenticeships), but this level of training doesn't often lead to well-paid jobs. Having apprenticeships that include Level 2 learning and skills, but are completed at Level 3 and above would support young people and our goal to meet the skills needs of the economy.

If all apprenticeships started at Level 3 we would:

- try to make sure there is still an appropriate programme of learning available at Level 2
- work with employers to make sure that there are clear career development routes from Level 2 learning to Level 3 apprenticeships and beyond.



?

Question

Do you think this is a good idea?

Yes No Don't know

Comment

?

Question

Do you think this is a good idea?

Yes No Don't know

Comment

5 We want to look at changing the Essential Skills Wales part of apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships include learning some skills that are seen as necessary for any job.

These include communication skills, basic mathematics, and ICT skills but sometimes people already have these skills and can show this in qualifications from school or college.

We want the qualifications that apprentices already have in these areas to be recognised as part of the apprenticeship framework if they cover the same skills and learning, so that people are not learning about the same thing twice.

6

We want to make sure that changes to apprenticeship systems in other parts of the UK don't disadvantage apprentices in Wales.

In England the apprenticeship system is changing.

- Frameworks are being replaced by standards that have been written by groups of employers.
- Standards are very focused on apprentices learning the skills that are required for specific jobs.
- There may not be qualifications in some standards, but apprentices will be assessed at the end of the apprenticeship; this assessment will be graded.



Question

Do you think this is a good idea?

Yes No Don't know

Comment



Question

This system is quite different from the one in Wales. Do you think any of these ideas would be good to adopt in Wales?

Yes No Don't know

Comment

7

We want to look at general apprenticeships.

Some apprenticeships are in general skills areas that could be carried into many different jobs. These include business administration, customer service, and management.

We want to see if these types of apprenticeships should carry on and if they are what employers' value or need, as they do not train apprentices in one particular job.

?

Questions

Do you think this is a good idea?

Yes

No

Don't know

Comment

Do you think there is anything we have missed or not thought about?

Yes

No

Don't know

Comment



Next steps

Thank you for reading this.

Please send your answers to:

Post-16 Policy Branch

Tŷ'r Afon

Bedwas

Caerphilly

CF83 8WT

e-mail: post16policybranch@wales.gsi.gov.uk

by 24 April 2015.

