



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Welsh Government Apprenticeship Recruitment Campaign 2022: integrated impact assessment

A summary of the impacts of the Apprenticeship Recruitment Campaign 2022.

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Section 1: What action is the Welsh Government considering and why?

It has been agreed by the PRP (Priority Resourcing Panel) that Welsh Government (WG) will run an apprenticeship intake in 2022. This scheme hopes to address:

- Ministerial commitments made to increase the number of school leavers that take on apprenticeships
- skills shortages by developing apprenticeships in growing and emerging sectors
- the increasing pressure for additional resource to respond to EU Transition, Covid-19 and critical 'business as usual' requirements
- the need to broaden the skillset and diversity of those employed by the WG in order to benefit the organisation as a whole and the people it serves

Bids will be collated from each DG area for suitable Apprenticeship posts. These roles will be assessed for their suitability in partnership with the Apprenticeship training provider (ALS), as well as ensuring that other relevant approvals are in place (JEGS, funding etc.).

The apprenticeships will be split into 3 pathways:

- Business and Administration
- Finance
- Digital, Data and Technology (DDAT).

To ensure the apprenticeship campaign provides long term resilience, is affordable and reduces our reliance on Agency, Contractor or Direct Appointments, it has been agreed that it will be in line with the following principles:

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- The advertisement and all appointments from the advertisement will be made on the basis of 'Fair, Open and on Merit' recruitment in line with the Civil Service Commission's Recruitment Principles.
- Appointments will be made on a fixed term basis for a period of 18 months to allow apprentices to undertake their training modules. Upon successful and satisfactory completion of the apprenticeship, candidates who have met all the criteria and completed the learning modules may be converted to a permanent contract subject to funding and approvals.
- All posts will be DRC funded and this will include the resulting 'on-costs' from the appointment. (In the event that DRC funding is not approved, only Programme funded posts may be advertised).

The majority of the roles which will be approved for filling by the Apprenticeship scheme will be 'generalist' in nature, with a focus on Business Administration. There will, however, be some more 'specialised' roles within Digital, Data & Technology and Finance; whilst these will not require direct appointment, they may require a more nuanced application and assessment process due to the nature of the roles.

There will be 3 adverts (one per Apprentice pathway) and the pay grade offered will be TS (Team Support). All new entrants will commence at the base of the TS pay range and will be eligible for incremental salary increases as per the organisation's Pay and Reward policy.

Long term

There are no long term trends, challenges or opportunities that will affect the proposal as it will be delivered over a relatively short timeframe. The proposal itself, however, has longer term implications for the organisation including increasing resource, headcount and DRC spend. In addition, the scheme intends to broaden the skillset and diversity of those employed by the organisation in order to benefit the organisation as a whole and the people it

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serves.

In order to attract a more diverse field of applicants – to better reflect the people of Wales - distinct attention has been paid to the language and outreach strategies used around the advert. Given that apprentices who successfully complete the scheme may be converted to permanent employees, this could improve the organisation's long term diversity targets and contribute to organisational commitments as part of the **Strategic Equality Plan** and the **Workforce equality, diversity and inclusion strategy: 2021 to 2026**.

By supporting a cohort of apprentices through their work-based learning journey and potentially offering ongoing employment with the organisation after successful completion of the apprenticeship programme, this scheme is in line with ministerial commitments to fund more apprenticeships and support people into the world of work. In addition, by recruiting individuals who have the skills the organisation needs, it has the potential to contribute towards better quality policy and legislative development and delivery across the organisation.

Prevention

The proposal supports the breaking of negative cycles (poverty, poor health, environmental) through recruiting and training apprentices to work in areas which develop policy solutions to tackle these cycles. The proposal also supports more individuals into work and work based training in line with recent Ministerial commitments.

The scheme will also seek to increase the diversity of those employed by the Welsh Government by making it clear (through adverts, guidance and outreach activity) that Welsh Government welcomes and encourages applications from people with protected characteristics.

Increasing employee diversity to levels which are more reflective of the

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population in Wales, can help the organisation to achieve more considered, inclusive, representative policy development and delivery across Welsh Government.

The external fair, open and on merit approach has the potential to interest a large number of individuals, we therefore expect a significant number of applications from individuals who have been financially disadvantaged or left without work as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The scheme would seek to support those who may have been left without employment to re-train on another career path or vocation.

Given the nature of the scheme, the minimisation of negative impacts from the proposal is small. It is intended that all interviews will be undertaken remotely and virtually which reduces potential emissions as it will not require individuals to travel to WG sites using their own or public transport. This would be particularly pertinent for those living in rural communities which may be a significant distance from a WG site. Given that interviews would be conducted virtually, notes and interview documents would all be completed and distributed electronically, also minimising the need for printing and also the need for staff to attend office locations.

Integration

Through offering this opportunity the Apprenticeship Scheme will seek to tackle worklessness issues by creating jobs and training and upskilling applicants to support ministers with the resource needed to deliver commitments in Taking Wales Forward and Prosperity for All. As vacancies will be spread across the organisation, the scheme will therefore benefit a range of different policy areas and current programmes.

By making it clear from our outreach activity and the wording in our advert that people can apply from a range of backgrounds or the third sector for this

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opportunity, the scheme will enable to sharing of knowledge and experience from individuals who may already have worked in other organisations. This would link with the commitment in Prosperity for All to enable public services and the voluntary sector to work together for the good of the people of Wales; and in turn contribute to the workforce of the organisation being more reflective of the people it serves.

The scheme will also support the Apprenticeships Skills Policy Plan commitments, as follows:

- Increasing the number of apprentices aged 16-19 by increasing the take-up of quality apprenticeships amongst school leavers
- Addressing skills shortages by developing apprenticeships particularly in growth and emerging sectors such as the ICT, Engineering, Construction and Financial and Professional Services
- Developing higher level skills by focusing on apprenticeships at level 4 and above where returns tend to be higher
- Developing skills pathways by integrating apprenticeships into the wider education system and making it easier for someone to enter into an apprenticeship from another learning route.

Collaboration

The HR Transition Team has liaised and consulted with a range of partners and stakeholders in planning and developing the Apprenticeship Scheme. These stakeholders include:

- ALS (the Apprentice Training Provider)
- Priority Resource Panel
- Group Resource Panels
- Heads of Profession/Profession leads where relevant
- HR Business Partner Teams

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- HR Expert Services
- HR Shared Service Centre
- Finance
- TUS
- Diversity in Recruitment Team
- Welsh Language Team
- Equality in the Workplace Team
- External & Internal Communications Teams
- Creative Team

These stakeholders have helped to determine the scale of the campaign, including its priority, design, costs and impact as well as the compliance and governance of the process as a whole.

Involvement

The apprenticeship scheme will enable teams across WG to have additional and refocussed resources to help them deliver on ministerial commitments. Each DG area will be engaged at the commissioning stage to allow them to identify which areas are a priority for Apprentice resource. They will be asked to ensure the roles they put forward are high quality positions offering a good level of support and development for an Apprentice. These posts require the approval of Local Resourcing Panels and PRP. They will also be assessed by ALS to ensure they meet the necessary criteria for work based learning to take place.

The scheme will have no impact on the TS-G7 internal progression Assessment Gateway scheme. TUS will be consulted to ensure that all views are considered and that the recruitment programme is considered to be fair. The selection process will be a Fair, Open and on Merit process.

The Equality in the Workplace and Diversity in Recruitment teams are fully engaged in the development of this scheme and all its outreach activity. This is

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to ensure it is inclusive and as attractive as possible to groups who are underrepresented in the WG workforce, for example, name-free sifting will be undertaken to reduce the risk of unconscious bias. It is hoped this campaign will help the organisation to achieve its diversity targets.

The Welsh Language Standards team will also be fully engaged to advise on compliance with Welsh Language Standards and promote the use of the Welsh Language within WG.

Impact

The main arguments in favour of the scheme are:

- Responding to the impact of EU Transition and the Coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated the organisation needs more people resource to undertake core EUT and Covid-19 response roles.
- This scheme will enable under-resourced teams who are delivering on critical government priorities to be appropriately resourced whilst also contributing to WG's commitment to deliver further apprenticeships for the people of Wales.
- Due to high satisfaction rates and a moratorium on most non-specialist external recruitment (with the exception of the recent external FTA/ Secondment bulk schemes), WG is a largely static organisation. The external recruitment of apprentices offers the opportunity to increase diversity of the WG workforce and bring fresh ideas and perspectives into the organisation.

The main arguments against the proposal are that:

- There will be an impact on the organisation's headcount and DRC spend as apprenticeships are offered on a fixed term basis until such time that the qualification is completed and performance/attendance is deemed to be

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satisfactory – at which point contracts are usually converted to permanency (although this is not guaranteed).

- A comprehensive outreach programme will provide WG with the best opportunity of recruiting a more diverse workforce; however, if successful will considerably increase the number of applications received for the scheme, which may increase the amount of time taken to run the scheme and onboard successful candidates. The resource required from the business in terms of sifting and interviewing may also be considerably higher dependent on the volume of applications received.

Costs and savings

Resource costs

In order to deliver the scheme, members of staff from the existing 'HR Transition/External Recruitment' Team will be used to deliver the scheme. An additional Team Support resource may be required to assist with delivering the scheme which may have an impact on running costs.

Funding

PRP has been agreed that DRC funding will be made available centrally for up to 50 Business and Administration Apprentices and Finance Apprentices for the 18 month term of the Apprenticeship. It is expected that the DDaT profession will recruit up to 10 DDaT Apprentices funded from DRC for the 18 month term also. This funding will cover associated on-costs (e.g. IT hardware/software, Facilities, HR support functions etc).

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Savings

Savings can be made by grouping all posts on to 3 Apprentice framework specific adverts as opposed to multiple single-post adverts.

Mechanism

Legislation is not required and as such a regulatory impact assessment is not needed.

Section 8: Conclusion

8.1 How have people most likely to be affected by the proposal been involved in developing it?

An Apprenticeship scheme is being run to fill critical posts at a Team Support level within Welsh Government whilst providing access to work based training for those looking for a new career or challenge. The main engagement and consultation undertaken regarding the scheme is with Internal Stakeholders and ALS Training.

A full list of internal stakeholders can be found in section one. These stakeholders provided advice, guidance, approval (when required) and assistance in developing and delivering the end-to-end process.

The Equality in the Workplace Team and the Diversity in Recruitment team will review all external communications, guidance documentation and outreach plans before the launch of the Apprenticeship Scheme to ensure it is as open and inclusive as possible.

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The Outreach activity will target networks – with representatives from groups with protected characteristics – with ‘pre advert communications’ for the campaign to encourage applications from a diverse field of candidates who are currently underrepresented in the workforce.

Golley Slater will be engaged specifically for the scheme, to provide expert advice on which media to use to target the widest field of candidates, as well as advice from External Communications colleagues.

The Welsh Language Division will consider and advise on the scheme’s compliance with the relevant Welsh Language Standards Legislation.

ALS Training via Tribal PLC will provide the online test and testing platform which will form a key part of the assessment. This supplier meets Government accessibility requirements and in doing so will be meeting accessibility regulations that apply to public sector organisations.

8.2 What are the most significant impacts, positive and negative?

The apprenticeship scheme will positively impact the ability of the organisation to deliver on ministerial priorities by providing essential resources across a range of business areas to address key priorities. It will also provide employment opportunities to a wide range of people with generalist or specialist skills, within or outside of the civil service, employed or unemployed across Wales and further afield.

8.3 In light of the impacts identified, how will the proposal: maximise contribution to our well-being objectives and the 7 well-being goals; and/or, avoid, reduce or mitigate

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any negative impacts?

Section 1, along with the Equality Impact Assessment and the Welsh Language Impact Assessment at Section E refer (Impact Assessments can be provided on request).

8.4 How will the impact of the proposal be monitored and evaluated as it progresses and when it concludes?

Regular reports and Equality and Diversity Management information will be reviewed as the recruitment campaign progresses.

In addition, key updates will be provided at significant milestones to key stakeholders (e.g. HR Business Partners, corporate resourcing panels) impacted by the recruitment campaign.

A full lessons learnt exercise will follow the recruitment campaign to identify any missed opportunities and to ensure the design of future campaigns will provide optimal results.

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