



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

# Young Person's Guarantee National Conversation: update for participants

How your feedback is helping to improve education and training opportunities in Wales.

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# Introduction

## Thank you for participating in the Young Person's Guarantee National Conversation

The Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) is the Welsh Government's commitment to support everyone under the age of 25 living in Wales to gain a place in education or training, to find a job or become self-employed.

The Welsh Government wants to ensure that the advice, guidance, support and programmes that are available to young people offer the best possible opportunities to succeed. To help us understand what can be done better, we wanted to hear from young people all across Wales, so your views can contribute to any changes in existing policies and help shape new policies.

## When you agreed to take part in the National Conversation focus groups, we told you that we would:

### Listen to what you have to say

Welsh Government wants to improve the services we offer so that every young person has an opportunity to succeed. We can only do this by listening to what you have to say.

### Consider your views

Once the information from the on-going focus groups has been collected, a report will be produced outlining what you've told us. We will use this to consider

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how we can make changes to existing programmes and services.

## **Feedback to you to let you know how you have helped us to shape new provision**

Once we have considered what changes we might be able to make, we will consult with groups of young people so that they can help us make sure those changes fit the bill.

## **What has happened so far?**

The first round of focus groups conducted by Beaufort Research took place during the summer of 2022. Additional conversations were held with participants of employability programmes and other youth groups. We also put our questions to young people aged 16 to 24 across Wales via an online survey!

All the information gathered from these groups and surveys was used to produce a report, which Welsh Government will publish and share widely across Welsh Government departments and with any stakeholders who have an interest in young people, education, training and/or employment.

## **Identified issues**

Welsh Government has already looked to improve on some of the issues raised, for example:

### **Identified issue: 41% of 16 to 24 years olds identified**

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# transport as being the number one barrier for 16 to 24 year olds to getting a new course, training or a job

## What are we doing about this?

Welsh Government has invested heavily in subsidised transport for young people. We aim to increase awareness of current support and availability of public transport to ensure that all young people, and those that work with young people, are aware of what help is available. We are doing this by increasing communications through given opportunities including stakeholder engagement, youth advisory board, enterprise and employment bureaus at further education (FE) colleges.

The Programme for Government includes a commitment to explore extensions of the MyTravelPass for reduced-cost travel for young people.

Learners enrolled on a Jobs Growth Wales Plus (JGW+) programme can now temporarily claim 100% of their travel costs, while the training allowance has been doubled to £60 per week.

Learners undertaking a ReACT+ programme can claim up to £300 of extra support towards additional costs while training, including travel.

Some FE colleges provide free or subsidised transport.

Learners in Communities for Work Plus (CfW+) might be eligible for barriers funding support to help pay towards travel costs whilst they're undertaking training.

We are continuing to investigate reasons that travel is a barrier to young people via round 2 of the National Conversation. We want to understand what other

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factors, aside from finance, might prevent young people from using of public transport, for example, confidence, access or availability

## **Identified issue: 73% of 16 to 18 years olds knew where to find the support or advice to help do the course or job they wanted, compared to only 47% of 19 to 24 year olds**

For those who had not contacted any organisations for help or support, when asked for the reason why they hadn't, 29% of 16 to 24 years olds said that they didn't know how to find this kind of service.

### **What are we doing about this?**

We have increased our awareness campaign for the YPG to ensure that young people know where to find the help and advice they need. The awareness campaign includes short, positive videos (as suggested by participants) that are being used on social media channels including Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. It also uses Welsh influencers to create content to be shared via their own channels, celebrities and advisors to engage with young people and their parents/carers (the Positive News Team) and a TV commercial. For more detail on the YPG campaign, visit [How we can help | Working Wales \(gov.wales\)](#) and scroll down to Young Person's Guarantee.

Careers Wales have published new parent pages on their website. The pages provide information and tools to help parents and carers support their child's learning and career decisions.

Employment and Enterprise Bureaus have been enhanced in all FE colleges, offering advice on education, training and employment and offering services such as help with finding work experience or volunteering, paid work, CV writing and employability skills.

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**Identified issue: 36% of 16 to 24 year olds reported lack of work experience to be a barrier to getting a new course, training or a job.**

### **What are we doing about this?**

Careers Wales have been allocated over half a million pounds to provide up to 500 tailored work experience placements over the next two years. These work experience placements will support mainly Y11 learners who have struggled to re-engage with their education following the disruption caused by the pandemic and are at risk of dropping out of education.

FE colleges will be developing and piloting new programmes for learners who are in FE colleges but whose programme of learning does not offer work experience as part of the course.

We want to understand young people's views on work experience, what they consider as work experience and what sort of work experience they would find useful and relevant. To help us learn more about this, we will continue to ask questions around this in the second round of the National Conversation.

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**Identified issue: While 38% of young people responded a lack of confidence was a barrier, managing mental health was also identified as a significant factor in preventing young people from gaining or maintaining a place in education, training or employment.**

### **What are we doing about this?**

Since 2020, Welsh Government has invested £16 million in FE Colleges allowing for additional staff to be employed to support learners with mental health and wellbeing, building resilience and digital wellbeing. Additional funding in 2022/23 will enable colleges to provide triage services to ensure the wellbeing and needs of the learner are identified and managed early, helping to improve confidence and reduce levels of anxiety.

£2.5 million has been made available to local authorities through a Youth Support Grant to support young people's emotional mental health and well-being through youth work approaches. Youth workers are skilled at working with young people and are often well placed to identify whether a young person may need additional support, and when that support may need to be provided by more specialist services.

A **Mental Health Toolkit** has been developed and is available via Hwb (The Mental Health Toolkit) linking young people aged 11 to 25 to websites, apps, helplines, and more, to build resilience across 6 categories:

- anxiety
- low mood
- keeping healthy
- bereavement

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- coronavirus information
- crisis

Local Health Boards have made available clear advice and information on how to access local mental health services, if needed. This can be found on individual health board websites.

We have increased our support for learners on JGW+ programmes to include enrichment activities for those who require support with their wellbeing and/or support to help them to remain engaged with their programme where they may be at risk of dropping out.

Communities for Work Plus learners have access to mentors to provide bespoke, tailored 1-2-1 support to individuals and confidence building courses are available to participants

We are continuing to learn more about specific Mental Health and confidence issues in the second round of the National Conversation. We want to delve a little deeper into young people's experiences of mental health support in their employment, education or training environment.

## What will happen next?

There is still more work for us to do in addressing the issues outlined and of course there are many other issues identified within the report that we still need to address, including (but not limited to):

- issues faced by young carers
- the impact that taking up education, employment or training might have on benefits
- issues faced by young people with a health problem or disability

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- transition between school and the next steps

Tackling all these issues takes time but we want to reassure you that we are reviewing and considering every comment you have all made during your feedback.

We have already started work on the next round of the National Conversation. This second round will delve deeper into some of the issues young people highlighted to help us gain a better understanding so we can think about what changes we might be able to make around those issues.

Once we have considered what changes we might be able to make, we will continue to keep young people involved in recommendations, changes and decisions. We will do this by establishing a Youth Advisory Board, which will meet for the first time in the spring of 2023.

As with the first round of the National Conversation, we won't be collecting your personal details so we won't be able to feed back to you directly, but we will feed back to your group facilitator who can let you know how your views have helped to influence changes here at Welsh Government.

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