

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Update for the Council for Economic Renewal Jobs Growth Wales</b></p>
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**Background**

1. The Minister for Education and Skills announced Jobs Growth Wales on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2011. Jobs Growth Wales demonstrates the Welsh Government's commitment to addressing youth unemployment by getting young people into work quickly and supporting them to remain there.

**The programme**

2. Jobs Growth Wales will commence in April 2012 and will create 4,000 new job opportunities per year. It will specifically target unemployed young people aged 16-24, providing them with a job opportunity for a 6-month period. Those involved will be paid at or above the National Minimum Wage for a minimum of 25 hours per week.
3. Jobs Growth Wales will offer participants an enhanced package of support from day one of unemployment, with the focus on supporting the individual to remain in, or progress into, sustained employment, where appropriate through an apprenticeship. This package will include a Skills Health Check for all participants which will provide independent advice and guidance from day one of unemployment, resulting in a comprehensive action plan aimed at progressing the young person into employment. We will continue to work with Job Centre Plus and Careers in rolling out the Skills Health check across Wales.
4. Jobs Growth Wales will cater for those that are job ready but have had difficulty securing employment. It will enable individuals to gain good quality work experience, valued so highly by employers, and which so many young people find the most significant barrier to securing that first step into employment. It will also provide a more supportive environment for those who need it to access and make the most of this opportunity to help them progress into sustainable employment.
5. Job opportunities will be made available for all job ready young people. We will also seek to ensure young people have the opportunity to enter jobs using both English and Welsh languages. We will deliver specific strands of support: to help graduates find work opportunities, building on the GO Wales Programme; to support young people to enter self employment, and to assist micro businesses to recruit their first employee. In doing so, we will build on, and enhance, existing and planned packages of business support delivered through the Department for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science.
6. The Programme has been developed to integrate and link fully with the Welsh Government's existing employability and skills programmes, for example Steps to Employment, Traineeships and the Apprenticeship Programme. It will support the delivery of other key Welsh Government policies and programmes and will also work alongside our targeted support for business through the Skills Growth Wales programme, growing both jobs and skills for Wales.

7. The programme will also fully align with support available for individuals through the Department for Work and Pensions and Job Centre plus.

### **Job opportunities**

8. We will seek to target significant job opportunities within the private sector, significantly improving the potential for individuals to progress into sustained employment (or where appropriate an apprenticeship) with those employers who have identified opportunities for business growth. We will also work closely with Anchor and Regionally Important Companies to identify their need for recruitment and match these employment opportunities with young people seeking work.
9. The third sector will continue to assist those young people requiring a more supported environment as they enter the labour market for the first time. This will include expanding on the existing Wales Council for Voluntary Action Intermediate Labour Market pilot. This is already proving successful in helping many young people who require more intensive support to reap the benefits from work experience opportunities. In recognition of the potential to expand this support further, we will commence a procurement exercise for additional contracts across the third sector which we will implement from September 2012.
10. All the jobs created will be additional to, and not replace, positions that would otherwise be filled by permanent staff or companies that have made people redundant. Individual job descriptions will be developed which outline the structure and scope of the job role that the young person will undertake. This will be developed in partnership with the employer and the contracted organisation (i.e. Work Based Learning Provider).
11. All job opportunities will be advertised, and we are currently exploring options to undertake this through the Apprenticeship Matching Service.

### **Quality and Governance arrangements**

12. Robust eligibility criteria and quality standards will be established prior to implementation. A moderating panel will be established from January 2012 to ensure these are being met. Membership of the panel will include employers, Job Centre Plus and Wales TUC.
13. In addition to our Project Board, we will establish an external stakeholders group to support the development and delivery of the programme.

### **Implementation**

14. Jobs Growth Wales will commence fully in April 2012. We will deliver a small pilot this autumn to test the approach within the private sector and to inform wider programme implementation from 2012.