



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**
Social Care **Wales**



An employer's guide to apprenticeships

in health and social care
and early years and childcare



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

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Copies also available in Welsh.

Why read this guide?

Recruiting new staff is crucial in securing a skilled, competent and confident health and social care, and early years and childcare workforce for the future. Apprenticeships are high on the Welsh Government's agenda as a programme to address recruitment and skills issues. They offer opportunities for you to have new or existing employees trained to industry standards funded by government. And for learners there's a chance to develop a rewarding, long-term career pathway in a growing sector.

- **Successful employers in health, social care, and early years and childcare** have a **clear approach for developing their staff**. They recognise that **skilled and qualified staff** make the difference to their business **performance** and give them **an edge** on their competitors.
- **Apprenticeships** offer you the opportunity to recruit new staff and have them trained or to give your own staff the chance to train towards **the required or recommended national qualifications**¹ as part of a programme that we **developed** with the needs and challenges of the health and care sectors firmly in mind. Only existing staff who have been in post (or a new role) for less than 12 months can access funding.
- This guide gives you with an overview of the content and structure of health and care apprenticeship programmes and check list for how you can get involved, which is a good practice guide that supports the employer and apprentice.
- This guide describes the benefits of having an apprenticeship scheme in any business and what it can bring, and outlines the way in which you, as employers **can help your apprentices to succeed**.
- We have a number of apprenticeship champions who are employers who use apprenticeship to recruit and/or train their staff. They can help you understand how to use the scheme and give you some advice on getting the most from it.

¹ Qualification Framework for the social care sector in Wales.

[List of Qualifications to work within the early years and childcare sector in Wales.](#)

Check list

Task	Further actions
Recruiting	Contact your learning provider to ask for an apprenticeship training place and check when they will have a place.
Choosing your learning provider	The Employer's toolkit ² developed by Social Care Wales provides some helpful hints in deciding what learning provider will suit your needs best. Your learning provider will help you with the various funding options available.
Young Recruits Scheme	Contact Business Wales ³ for further information or call the helpline on 0300 6 03000.
Traineeships	For further information on traineeship and eligibility, please see this simple factsheet on traineeships at http://www.careerswales.com/employers/upload/pdf/Traineeships_Factsheet_English_Amended.pdf
Careers Wales Matching Service	Contact Careers Wales ⁴ to join the apprenticeship matching service to help you advertise for new apprentices.
Prepare the advert	Use National Occupational Standards to determine the competences you require (see Using National Occupational Standards ⁵ by Social Care Wales).
During your interview and recruitment process	Make sure you know from your learning provider what the essential requirements are to access the apprenticeship training. You may want to involve your learning provider in the selection process. Consider some initial assessment of literacy.
After you have your apprentice appointed	Identify a mentor to work with your apprentice. Set an individual work plan to include the work (and learning) they will do and when they will do it. Include induction and mandatory training and make sure the learning provider know what is delivered and when. Work with the learning provider to identify what optional units your recruit will do based on the work-plan and the roles they are doing.
Review progress	Make sure you know how your apprentice is doing throughout their time with you. Stay in touch with the learning providers to check progress.
Claim your Young Recruit Grants	You must have registered and have your young recruit grant agreed as soon as possible as your apprentice starts. You claim every 13 weeks (in arrears) for your money through the process sent with your agreement form.

² socialcare.wales/learning-and-development

³ <https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/recruitment-support>

⁴ www.careerswales.com

⁵ www.careerswales.com

How can apprenticeships help your business to grow?

Recruiting apprentices is an investment in your company's future. Being on an apprenticeship programme can increase an employee's level of job satisfaction, making them less likely to look for job opportunities elsewhere and reducing your recruitment and turnover costs in the longer term.

Benefits to employers

- Apprenticeships can make workplaces more productive and profitable. They can introduce new skills and ideas and challenge long-standing practices.
- Apprenticeships can effectively address skills gaps in current and future workforce strategies.
- Apprentices offer employers a cost-effective, low risk way to grow the workforce.
- Training and development support and government funding is available.
- Employers can create and manage a completely tailored Apprenticeship programme that meets the needs of their businesses.
- Employers can benefit from a more motivated, knowledgeable and competent workforce.

Benefits to apprentices

- Apprentices can earn a salary whilst receiving training, gaining qualifications and learning job-specific skills.
- Apprenticeships can offer a first step onto a career pathway in health and social care, and early years and childcare, across a wide range of roles and employers.
- Apprentices take part in a structured development pathway, often leading to a rewarding, long-term career in the growing health and care sectors.
- Existing employees can start an Apprenticeship as part of their continuing professional development (if they have been in the role for under 12 months), whereas new employees can be recruited straight onto an Apprenticeship programme from school, college or even another profession.
- Apprenticeships in Wales are for people of any age.

Who are apprentices?

Apprentices work as employees alongside experienced staff to gain job-specific skills, whilst working towards a number of qualifications and gaining experience. All whilst getting paid.

An apprenticeship is a work-based learning programme designed around the needs of employers, which leads to nationally recognised qualifications that meet regulatory requirements. It is available to anyone aged 16 and above and is made up of a practical competency component, on-the-job training and off-the-job learning which includes communication, using numbers and digital literacy.

They can be people you recruit through the Jobcentre, Careers Wales, learning providers or by advertising online or in local papers.

They can be existing members of your staff who want to get the required or recommended qualifications for their current or new job role (e.g. following promotion) providing they have been in that job for 12 months or less when they start the programme.

Recruiting young people

Apprenticeships can be very motivating for young people starting out in the health and care sector. They provide the opportunity to achieve the nationally recognised qualifications at the same time as gaining valuable experience of your organisation and the way things are done in your establishment. Apprentices aged under 19 or in the first year of an apprenticeship must be paid at least the minimum training allowance. Those aged over 19 that have completed at least one year of their apprenticeship must be paid the full National Minimum Wage rate applicable for their age and the National Living Wage for people over 25 years-old.

Apprentices are often assumed to be young people leaving school. Apprentices in Wales can be of any age, and some support is available for businesses to take an apprentice who has been made redundant from their last job through the React scheme⁶. The health and care sectors has apprentices from 16 to 60+.

Employers have found apprenticeships to be such a valuable part of their staff development programme that they have incorporated them into the portfolio of training opportunities available to their staff. In this situation the learning providers will provide the training for your apprentice but you as the employer will continue to pay the member of staff on their current terms and conditions however you may need to wait until a learning provider has space on their schemes to for your staff, so early contact is preferred.

⁶ <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/reactemployers/?lang=en>

Practical tip:

As the employer, having good interviewing skills is essential and being prepared is key to successfully recruiting the right person.

What do apprentices achieve?

Apprentices will receive the qualifications, knowledge and skills you need for your staff team. These are the qualifications and skills that they will need for a career in health, social care or children's care learning and development. They will:

- complete the Diploma suitable for the job role at either level 2 or level 3. These are the required or recommended qualifications under Welsh legislation and regulation.
- be given the opportunity to complete the learning programme through the medium of English, Welsh or bilingually⁷.
- Improve their communication, application of number and digital literacy and will obtain the Essential Skills qualifications⁸.
- be offered between 210 and 280 hours training 'off the job' by the learning provider, or may do some of this through your in house training e.g. moving and handling, fire safety, health and safety etc. (This typically relates to Essential Skills qualifications above.) 'Off the job' means that the employee is not on shift but should still be paid for these hours.
- get between 1,480 and 2,000 hours (depending on the apprenticeship and level) of real work experience in your organisation when they will be undertaking the usual caring tasks and having their competence assessed.
- they will receive the knowledge and skills about their job role from you as the employer and your staff (as well as support and assessment from the college or learning provider).

⁷ socialcare.wales/learning-and-development

⁸ <http://qualificationswales.org/qualifications/essential-skills-qualifications/?lang=en>

What is the employers' role in the apprenticeship programme?

Your business is central to the learning and development of your apprentice. At the start of the process you will need to agree with the learning provider how the setting and training will help the apprentices learning experience and progress.

Here are some things that you can do to make a real difference:

Recruitment

Some learning providers are recruiting apprentices and then approaching employers. This is no longer allowed and you need to take control of recruiting your own apprentices.

Practical Tip:

How do you select your learning provider?

Have a look at the Employers' Toolkit for Learning and Assessment in Wales.⁹

This best practice guide identifies expectations and best practice in the delivery and assessment of qualifications and training in the health and social care, early years and childcare sectors in Wales.

Welsh Government – Traineeships¹⁰

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/traineeships/?lang=en>

The Traineeship programme is aimed at young people aged 16-17 years-old who are not in employment (eligible young people aged 18 may also participate).

This would initially be a 10-week programme for people who are not sure if they want to work in the sector and you can decide if you want to take people at this stage or not. The prospective trainee may be paid a training allowance by the Welsh Government for the 10-week period.

The trainee could then undertake the level 1 Traineeship completing level 1 Introduction to Health and Social Care (adults, children and young people), early years and childcare (Wales and Northern Ireland) (award or certificate). This is an eight-week learning programme followed by work experience, and the Welsh Government pays them a training allowance.

⁹ socialcare.wales/learning-and-development

¹⁰ <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/traineeships/?lang=en>

Recruiting your apprentice: Careers Wales Apprenticeship Matching Service¹¹

If you want to recruit an apprentice, employers can contact Careers Wales to join the matching service, or you can use universal jobs.

As an employer you will receive advice and support with the recruitment process from a learning provider if required

Funding for training: leaders and managers

Level 5 Professional Frameworks in:

- Advanced Practice in Social Care (including pathways for people working in Adult Care and Children and Young People's Social Care).
- Leadership in Social Care (including pathways in Management in Adult Care and Care or Children and Young People and Residential Care Management; Adult Care or Children and Young People social care).
- Leadership and Management in Children's Care Learning and Development (including pathways in Advanced Practice and Management).
- These frameworks are funded and offer professional development for level 3 workers and provide opportunities to develop and upskill existing staff to management roles where they have access to activities that will enable them to provide the required evidence of competence.

Next steps

Talk to your learning provider about your in-house training programmes and make sure that they are taken into account when your apprentice's programme is being planned.

Discuss your apprentice's work role with the learning provider and ensure the optional units selected are right for both your employee and your business.

Read through any information that your learning provider gives you about the apprenticeship programme and discuss it with your apprentice. Some areas that the apprentice will be covering may bring benefits to your business and can be shared with other staff.

If you do not work closely with the apprentice, talk to their line manager and ensure that they are familiar with programme requirements and understand how they can best support the apprentice and share relevant information with all personnel.

It is good practice for the apprentice to be provided with an internal mentor to work in partnership with the learning provider.

It is essential that your apprentice's programme is planned to take account of their work role and the training opportunities already available to them. Discuss opportunities for the apprentice to work through the medium of Welsh and bilingually.

Communication is vital.

¹¹ <https://www.careerswales.com/>

Training

The training you provide at your workplace is an important part of the apprentice's programme. In the workplace apprentices develop new knowledge and skills and can put into practice what they learn from any off-the-job training sessions. Good on-the-job training is an essential feature of an apprenticeship. Make sure that your apprentice has access to relevant in-house training opportunities including induction and statutory training which adds value to their continuing professional development.

The employer needs to discuss ways in which they can support their apprentice in developing the necessary knowledge and skills with their learning provider or with the apprentice's line manager. This may mean reviewing the apprentice's work role to ensure they gain experience in different parts of the organisation, carrying out different tasks.

Practical tip:

Have a look at the overview of the Diploma Units.¹²

Identify any areas that do not happen routinely and may need some planning to enable the apprentice to demonstrate their competence. Identify any specialist areas that you think would benefit your service or the apprentice in terms of their learning and development. Discuss this with your learning provider and/or with the apprentice's line manager to see how this can best be tackled.

Practical tip:

Discuss ways in which Welsh speaking staff within the setting can encourage apprentice's communication skills in Welsh for customer service in the future.

More than just words¹³, the Welsh Government's Strategic Framework for the Welsh language in Health and Social Care, requires care providers to make sure they are able to actively offer Welsh language care services to the same standard as English language care services.

Consider contacting organisations that provide Welsh language programmes for learners. For further information contact Learn Cymraeg.¹⁴

Be aware that apprentices will be required to attend training sessions as they complete their programme. In health and social care, and children's care learning and development this ranges from 200 hours to 240 hours depending on the framework and the level being completed. Ask your learning provider what these will cover. Sessions will be planned in advance and attendance is essential as it will support the underpinning knowledge of units in the diploma.

Apprentices need allocated time in the workplace to discuss their portfolio of evidence with their mentor. Where appropriate, discuss this with the apprentice's line manager and identify quiet periods and a suitable location where your apprentice can complete this work.

¹² socialcare.wales/learning-and-development

¹³ <http://gov.wales/topics/health/publications/health/guidance/words/?lang=en>

¹⁴ <http://www.learnwymraeg.org/>

Allocated time must also be provided to allow the apprentices to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding and have their competence tested by assessors.

There is also a requirement to complete an online test for communication, application of number and digital literacy. The Wales Essential Skills Toolkit (WEST)¹⁵ is bilingual and supports a consistent approach to the assessment and learning of Essential Skills.

Practical tip:

Consider supporting some of your more experienced staff to train as work-based assessors. This is a good staff development opportunity for them, as well as increasing the support for your apprentices.

For further information on assessor training contact your local college or training provider.

Providing feedback and taking part in progress reviews

Consider identifying a more experienced colleague who can act as a mentor/buddy to the apprentice to provide them with on-going support in the workplace.

Ensure a representative (mentor/buddy) sets time aside in their own diary to chat to the apprentice about their progress and areas where they may need help. Ask questions about their work and provide encouragement. Recognise their achievements. Look at the targets set for the apprentice at their last review to see if all is going to plan.

Apprentices will need to have regular progress reviews with their learning provider and ensure that you, or an appointed colleague, are present each time the apprentice has a progress review with their trainer/assessor. Contributions from the employer should highlight the progress and achievements of the apprentice.

Practical tip:

Apprenticeship programmes encourage partnership working and employer engagement.

Make a note in your diary of the dates and times of the progress reviews. If you need to re-negotiate the arrangements for reviews with the learning provider, then do so. This is much better than you not being there at all.

Remember

You as the employer and your learning provider have an obligation to ensure that apprentices work in a safe environment in line with your organisations policies and procedures, and that you hold appropriate insurance cover.

As an employer it is your responsibility to provide mandatory training (please refer to the framework for further details).

¹⁵ <https://www.walesessentialskills.com/?q=node/6&clear-cookie=true>

How do I get involved in the apprenticeship scheme?

Apprenticeships will complement the in-house training offered by employers in our sector. Employers need to take some control over apprenticeship programmes and use them imaginatively and creatively to fill skills and knowledge gaps, aid recruitment and retention and provide opportunities to train existing staff.

1. If you are keen to get involved with an apprenticeship programme then approach the Skills People Success¹⁶ for the information pack on apprenticeships in Wales on 0845 6066160 or email info@skillspeoplesuccess.com.
2. You can work with a local learning provider, either in a college or from a list of private companies to recruit a suitable apprentice together. A list of training providers or local colleges contracted by the Welsh Government to offer this service are listed in the National Training Federation Wales¹⁷ website.
3. Contact a learning provider (or speak to several and decide who meets your needs best) and arrange a discussion on apprenticeships and what it can do for your business. Agree a partnership arrangement that you feel works for you. Ask for information on the funding and arrangements for agreeing the range of units (knowledge and skills) you want the person to have to complement the skills needs of your staff group.

You will pay for the cost of the wages for someone under 19 years-old or in the first year of their apprenticeships must be paid at least the agreed minimum training allowance for the first 12 months then National Minimum Wage¹⁸ (NMW) for the person's age. NMW also applies to people over 19.

The learning provider will provide the training and assessment costs for that person. If your recruit is between 16 and 24 you may be entitled to £2600 per year to support the apprentice under the New Recruit programme, but you must register for the scheme within 20 weeks of the apprentice starting (registering early is the best advice). You will receive the allowance (if you are eligible) 13 weeks in arrears.

Practical tip:

Ensure that all paperwork is photocopied and sent by recorded delivery for your own records.

¹⁶ <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/skillspeoplesuccess/firsttimers/?lang=en>

¹⁷ <https://www.ntfw.org/>

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage/who-gets-the-minimum-wage>

Want to know what employers and apprentices have to say about their Apprenticeship experience?

Case study

Amy Louise Kemshell, nursery practitioner
socialcare.wales

Podcast

Ann Farr, apprenticeship assessor
socialcare.wales

Podcast

Rosie and Loren, apprenticeship nursery practitioners
<https://soundcloud.com/charmine-smikle/wyngarth-rosie-and-lauren>

Podcast

James Brown, care practitioner
<https://soundcloud.com/charmine-smikle/james-bowen-national>

Social Care Wales TV (YouTube clips)

Employers views on apprenticeships
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEZj8vabV3cvjYE8Xs_g0zKErC3cf9uKK

Apprenticeship employer champions

The aim of the apprenticeships employer champions is to encourage and increase participation and share good practice with the other employers in the sector. Social Care Wales has a team of experienced employer champions specialising in health and social care and children and early years sector. If you are interested in speaking to an employer champion, contact us via our website.

Watch our employers and apprentices YouTube clip https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEZj8vabV3cvjYE8Xs_g0zKErC3cf9uKK showing employer champions talking about how running Apprenticeship schemes have benefitted their business, their workers and the people who need care and support.

Information on funding and sources of further advice

Funding:

Progress for Success

Progress for Success¹⁹ is ESF funding for employers of professionals working in the early years, childcare or play sector, who are looking to increase the skills of those with qualifications below Level 3. Contact Business Wales²⁰ for further information, or call the helpline on 03000 6 03000.

SEE (Skills for Employers and Employees)

If you operate in north Wales (Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire, Conwy, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey), then all your employees are eligible for SEE support. Contact Business Wales for further information, or call the helpline on 03000 6 03000.

ReAct

Funding is available to your business if the individual you wish to recruit is either under formal notice of redundancy or has become unemployed in the last three months as a result of redundancy. The individual must have been a resident in Wales at the time they first became eligible for ReAct. Contact the Skills Delivery Team²¹ for further information.

The Apprenticeship Levy²²

The Apprenticeship levy is a UK Government employment tax that is due to come into force in April 2017. It is being introduced in the 2016 Finance Bill.

It will be collected across the whole of the UK. All employers (public, private and third sector) with a pay bill of more than £3 million each year will pay the levy. The levy rate is 0.5% of pay bill; there is an allowance of £15,000 per year, this means that the total amount you need to spend is 0.5% of your pay bill, minus £15,000. The levy is paid to HM Revenue and Customs through the PAYE process.

¹⁹ <https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/progress-success>

²⁰ <https://businesswales.gov.wales/>

²¹ <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/reactemployers/?lang=en>

²² <https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/apprenticeship-levy>

Quick links to sources of further advice:

Social Care Wales, Apprenticeships

socialcare.wales

Social Care Wales, Work experience guide

socialcare.wales

Careers Wales, Apprenticeships Matching Service

www.careerswales.com/employers/server.php?show=nav.6563

Directgov, National minimum wage

www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/Pay/DG_10027201

Learn Cymraeg

www.learncymraeg.org

Welsh Government, Skills People Success

<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/skillspeoplesuccess/firsttimers/?lang=en>

Welsh Government, Young Recruits Programme

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/young-recruits-programme>

Welsh Government, Jobs Growth Wales

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/jobs-growth-wales>

ReAct

<http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/reactemployers/?lang=en>

Progress for Success

<http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/early-years/progress-for-success/?lang=en>

SEE

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/blog/news/skills-employers-and-employees-see>

Traineeship

www.careerswales.com/employers/upload/pdf/Traineeships_Factsheet_English_Amended.pdf

National Training Federation Wales

www.ntfw.org