

This response was submitted to the [Children, Young People and Education Committee](#) on the [Routes into post-16 education and training](#)

RET 17

Ymateb gan: Gyrfa Cymru

Response from: Careers Wales

Quality of information given to learners about the full range of post-16 options (vocational and academic routes post 16, i.e. further education, sixth form, apprenticeships and training, and onward to higher education)

Quality and nature of information provided to learners within schools and those educated other than at school (EOTAS).

Careers Wales is the national careers service for Wales and is remitted to deliver the statutory duty on behalf of the Welsh Government in providing impartial careers guidance to young people aged 14 – 19. We offer every young person a careers guidance interview before they leave compulsory education. We have a Partnership Agreement in place with all secondary schools, special schools and PRUs that outline the support that will be provided to the school for the academic year.

Careers Wales is only one part of the landscape of providing information to learners within schools and EOTAS provision. Dr Hefin David MS's 'Transitions to Employment report recommends 'Learners should be provided with authentic and meaningful experiences of the world of work supported by the new Curriculum for Wales provision for Careers and Work-Related Experiences from 3-16. Welsh Government should ensure that further education institutions, employers and other relevant stakeholders have appropriate access to learners throughout their school career, particularly at age 11-16.' This is only possible if all partners work in collaboration for the good of learners.

Careers Wales welcomed the 14–16 learning guidance that outlines learner entitlement during Year 10 and 11. It also welcomed the focus on CWRE and the provision that all learners receive a course of careers education and access to information from Careers Wales. We are particularly interested to understand how this will be monitored across Wales to ensure consistency of quality for learners.



Quality and nature of information provided directly to learners by Careers Wales.

Careers Wales provides a national careers information, advice and guidance service for the people of Wales, supporting young people and adults to make successful transitions into education, employment and training (EET). At the forefront of our delivery are our professionally trained careers advisers. Careers Wales' professional standards for advisers require them to achieve QCF Level 6 in Career Guidance and Development or the equivalent and register with the Career Development Institute's (CDI) UK Register of Career Development Professionals. They provide impartial and professional support to individuals and co-ordinate the range of services of the Careers Wales team for individual schools.

We offer all pupils a guidance interview before leaving school, with ongoing support which will be tailored to meet their individual need. We provide four levels of support:

1. **Universal support** - offer of a guidance interview and additional support based on the careers advisers professional judgement
2. **Career Check support** - one to one support for those young people identified from Career Check as in need of guidance and coaching support
3. **Targeted support** for young people whose individual characteristics can lead to them not being in education, employment or training post compulsory education
4. **Additional Learning Needs support** - one to one support for those young people identified as having additional learning needs (ALN).

Careers Wales has rigorous evaluation and continuous improvement processes in place to ensure the quality of service provided to customers.

Every customer is sent a 'Customer Satisfaction Survey' following their first guidance interview with a careers adviser. The results of this survey have been consistently positive over many years. Results include:

98% of customers were satisfied with the service they received from Careers Wales

94% would recommend the Careers Wales to family/friends

97% agreed the adviser helped them understand their options

96% agreed the adviser gave them the help they needed

A key component of Careers Wales's Continuous Improvement Framework is direct observation of work with customers/stakeholders. Observation helps us understand the standard of service



being delivered to customers/stakeholders, and how the skills of employees are used to support and enable customers/stakeholders to achieve appropriate outcomes.

Careers Wales is subject to ESTYN inspections. In the most recent thematic inspection, ESTYN stated:

‘We found most of the young people eligible for a guidance session at the schools and settings we visited make good progress from their differing starting points when creating their plans for the future. They discuss their ideas and respond well to questions and challenges posed when a plan may seem risky. Where young people begin their guidance session with unrealistic plans and ideas, this usually stems from a lack of support from their school or setting. Following guidance, these young people make very good progress towards understanding the post-16 routes available to them.’

The extent to which further education colleges are able to engage directly with learners in schools.

The picture across Wales is varied, we surveyed our careers advisers across Wales and 86% agreed that FE colleges do engage directly with schools.

There appears to be a more productive/creative relationships between schools and FE colleges when schools do not have a sixth form. It would appear the careers adviser is the only consistent channel through which young people and parents hear about all post-16 options in available.

Links between colleges and schools appear consistently strong in relation to ALN learners and transition planning. All ALN careers advisers commented on excellent liaison between FE and schools – attending reviews, arranging taster courses and campus visits.

Some examples of how colleges engage with schools include:

- The Learner Services team liaise with the careers coordinator and offer to undertake group sessions to help with college applications.
- Designated school liaison staff contact schools to offer support and have a presence at school open events. They also help with learners who are looking at college as an intended destination or those who are making a managed transition to FE e.g education other than at school (EOTAS)
- Colleges visit schools to support with application forms.
- Apprenticeship departments visit schools to make presentations.
- Schools and colleges work together on a list of pupils who should have submitted a college application. The list is monitored to ensure that applications are in place. One

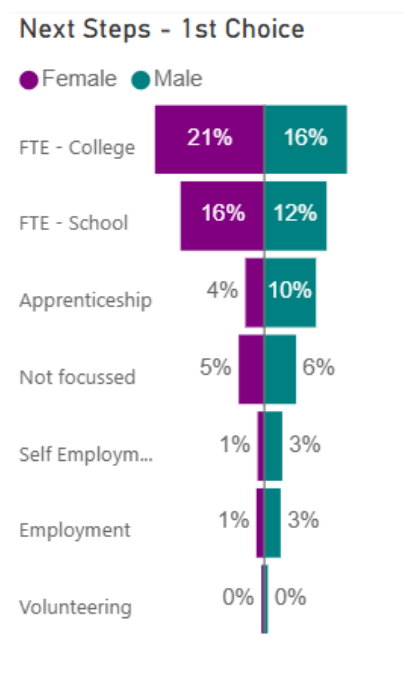


area in Gwynedd is a tertiary area where there is notably good collaboration between the college and the schools.

The extent to which learners in schools are made aware of the options available to them in school sixth forms and local further education colleges, and how closely schools engage with local colleges. Are there any conflicts of interest between sixth forms and further education colleges and is this more prevalent in some areas of Wales more than others?

Careers Wales plays a pivotal role in raising young people's awareness of all the options available to them. We undertake a large survey of year 10 pupils across Wales, this survey (Career Check) is on average completed by over 28,000 learners.

Young people are asked about their intended destinations, 1st and 2nd choice. The image below shows the 1st intended destination of the current year 11:



This broadly aligns with the actual destination trends, with the exception of apprenticeships, where it is consistently a first choice for 13.5 % of the cohort and second choice for 21% of the cohort. However, when we compare this with the destination survey there is a difference in take up with only 1.6% of young people leaving Year 11, who left school in 2024 entering work-based training (WBT) with employed status.



In our internal survey with our careers advisers, 45% said that there can be conflicts of interest between schools with sixth forms and FE colleges.

Examples highlighted included:

- Lack of transparency in sharing marketing materials
- Not inviting FE representative to attend school open days
- Challenging careers advisers around sharing information on FE offer

The extent to which employers are able to engage directly with learners in schools, for example at careers events.

Careers Wales has well established links with local and national employers to support its approach to employer engagement. We have a national team of Business Engagements Advisers, experienced in working with employers and expert in their knowledge of national and regional labour market trends.

Service Offer

- Visits to employer premises
- Employer talks in schools
- Digital employer presentations and virtual CWRE activities
- World of work days/carousel events
- Speed networking sessions
- The development of employer challenges and specific curriculum related content
- Support to develop alumni networks and strategic links with employers

Big Ideas Wales

During 2024/25, Careers Wales will again have responsibility for the organisation and management of entrepreneur role model workshops as part of Welsh Government's Big Ideas Wales programme. Details of programme delivery will be discussed with individual schools.

The engagement of employers is essential to:

- Help pupils understand how the subjects they study at school are relevant to the world of work
- Provide pupils with access to employer experiences which help them to plan their career journey
- Provide information about local, regional and national trends in the labour market
- Help raise pupils' aspirations about their future career goals.
- Challenge career limiting beliefs relating to gender, race and background



During the 23-24 business year Careers Wales delivered 1,589 employer engagement activities with schools, the offer is available to all settings.

Between 1st April 2024 and 30th November 2024:

- 203 mainstream secondary schools have participated in at least one employer event
- 169 have participated in 3 or more events
- 46 special schools and PRUs have participated in at least one event
- 20 have participated in 3 or more

Careers Wales has a robust evaluation plan in place for these events, with results being consistently positive:

- 85% of learners survey were positive about the event they attended
- 97% told us that they felt better informed as a result of attending
- 83% were more confident to plan for their future as a result of attending
- 84% felt more motivated to plan for their future as a result of attending

Who else influences learners future career choices (e.g. parents, teachers, peers), and how well are those people supported to do this.

According to the recent national conversation report there are multiple sources which led young people to choose their next step. External advice from teachers is the highest source (40%) followed by advice from parents/carers (30%) and careers advisers (24%).

Careers Wales provides multiple options for capacity building of teachers as the top influencers.

Careers Wales Quality Award (CWQA)

Careers Wales are currently piloting the CWQA with 49 schools and setting across Wales. It has been designed to align with the Curriculum for Wales for 3-16 year olds and aims to support schools to create high quality careers and work-related experiences (CWRE).

Each school has ongoing support from a Careers Wales CWRE Curriculum Coordinator who provides bespoke consultancy and training. Careers Wales also provides a moderation role in assessing all criteria submitted for the CWQA.

The CWQA has 3 stages, each with a different focus;



- Stage 1 – Leadership
This stage is about formulating and maintaining the commitment to lead the development of CWRE.
- Stage 2 – Development
This stage is about realising CWRE in the curriculum through professional learning, stakeholder engagement and effective teaching and learning.
- Stage 3 – Impact
This stage is about demonstrating impact in CWRE.

39 schools are currently working towards stage two, and a further 10 schools of the new cohort are working towards Stage one.

Careers Wales also deliver consultancy to schools outside of those undertaking the CWQA. Our offer to non CWQA schools has been reduced to an upon request basis offer and our generic offer to primary schools is restricted to referral to online resources.

The Careers Development Award

The former Careers Wales Mark has been rebranded as **'The Careers Development Award'** for use in FEIs. This will continue to be promoted until a potential review in line with Medr developments.

The Curriculum for Wales statutory guidance highlights that schools and settings should ensure their staff engage in appropriate and relevant professional learning opportunities to help CWRE become effectively integrated in their curriculum. Practitioners are also encouraged to undertake training opportunities offered by employers and other organisations, to help them learn about the latest developments in the world of work. In order to support schools and settings with this, Careers Wales offers a range of professional learning opportunities for careers leaders and other school staff.

Accredited Level 6 qualification

Careers Wales annually delivers an accredited Level 6 qualification in careers leadership to support practitioners embed careers and work-related experiences (CWRE) across their curriculum. Delivered by Careers Wales, and endorsed by the National Academy for Educational Leadership Wales, the qualification supports schools as learning organisations and the professional standards for teaching and leadership.

Parents

Careers Wales has set out an ambitious vision in our [Brighter Futures](#) strategy which acknowledges the requirement to engage and support parents. We recognise that, for many young people, parents are key influencers who have an important role to play in shaping and



guiding decisions. Research shows time and again that parents are one of the biggest sources of influence and the biggest source of careers advice for young people

Ensuring that parents are knowledgeable and suitably prepared to support their child in their career planning will help young people make more informed decisions.

Careers Wales also has a comprehensive parent strategy which includes attendance at parents' events, one-to-one interactions with parents and a termly newsletters which includes information on options, LMI, campaigns and our website. In the 2024-25 business year, to-date careers advisers in schools have achieved the following in terms of our parent work:

- Attendance at 216 parent events (e.g online events aimed at EHE parents, parent evenings in schools, options events in schools, open evenings and other community-based events such as stakeholder services events and the Eisteddfod)
- Recorded 13,966 interactions with parents/guardians (parent evenings, careers guidance follow-ups with parents, e-mail and text responses to queries from parents)
- Involvement in 5,021 other parent activities (advocacy, liaison, attendance at reviews)

Our website parent pages are available to provide information aimed at enabling parents to best support their children with all aspects of career planning and decision making. There are generic pages which provide an overview of our services and how they can help their children as well as more targeted information aimed at specific groups such as those Electively Home Educated, ALN etc. We also provide information on specific topics such as year 9/ post-16 options, work experience, the opportunity structure and how to prepare for a careers guidance interview.

The pages most visited are:

- Information for parents of children in KS4 (35%)
- Exploring career ideas with your child (33%)
- Information for parents of children in KS3 (24%)
- Work experience (18%)
- Information for parents of children in college and 6th form (16%)

How effective careers support is at compulsory school age?

To what extent careers support at pre-16 is resulting in positive or negative outcomes post-16 e.g. young people finding themselves not in education, employment or training (NEET).



Careers support can take a variety of forms which include:

- Careers guidance interviews
- Follow up interviews / digital contacts
- Group sessions
- Practical support e.g. with applications
- Advocacy support
- Meetings with parents
- Business engagement activities

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Within our strategic vision [Brighter Futures](#), Careers Wales has two KPIs for young people linked specifically to careers guidance interviews.

The first relates to young people in year 11 in mainstream schools:

95% of young people in year 11 who receive a guidance interview will enter a positive destination.

Since the start of Brighter Futures, we have consistently exceeded this target.

The second relates to young people who fall within our priority groups. Our KPI for the targeted group is for 85% who have had guidance to enter a positive destination.

We identified specific groups of young people that may require additional support to make a successful transition from school. Our priority groups include young people who have Additional Learning Needs at School Action Plus/IDP level, young carers, care experienced young people, young people on free school meals, young people who are Educated Other than at School (EOTAS) and young people who are poor attenders.

We have consistently exceeded this figure with over 90% of this group entering a positive destination each year.

Home Educated

Careers Wales also has advisers who support young people who are home educated. This is a group that is increasing in number. Data analysis indicates that home educated students who had one-to-one interactions with a careers adviser were more likely to achieve positive outcomes. Specifically, 82% of those who engaged in a careers guidance interview successfully transitioned into positive destinations. In contrast, only 54% of young people, who did not receive a careers guidance interview were confirmed as having achieved a positive destination.

Pupil Wellbeing

School staff and careers advisers are finding that higher numbers of young people are experiencing anxiety and mental health issues. Our destination data for the last 3 years



demonstrates that of the people who were NEET at the end of year 11 the majority (over 65%) each year were unable or not ready to enter EET at the point of the destinations snapshot (31/10).

A study evidences that careers guidance can impact positively on wellbeing for adults. Careers Wales is currently involved with an international study of the impact of careers guidance on the wellbeing of young people. Initial indications are similar to the results of the adult study, the report will be published during 2025.

Careers Wales recently undertook an internal review of the work with targeted learners with Chris Percy, (Independent Strategy & Policy consultant / Data Scientist) the headlines from this include:

- Students make significant progress in our four Distance Travelled questions over year 11, improving on average one step on one question, e.g. from disagree to agree that they feel confident about what they need to do (2021/22 data, n=882).
- Having more one-on-one time with careers advisers appears to be a major driver of this progress, using appropriate statistical analysis to account for how support is personalised such that students in more need get more help.
- Analysis of post-16 NEET outcomes also suggests a positive relationship with extra one-on-one support, but the sample sizes are too low to be precise about this evidence yet (since only 3.2% of the targeted support sample with CAT data were NEET in 2021/22, n=6230).
- We're continuing to evaluate this programme as more years of data become available for analysis and programme implementation is refined over time, enabling us to build confidence in these assessments.

Due to sample size Careers Wales were not in a position to share this work wider.

Whether work experience opportunities for learners of compulsory school are operational, effective and meaningful and any barriers in that regard.

Generally, there is an inconsistent offer to learners across Wales. There are some schools and some local authorities that offer work experience to some learners, but they are few in number and the offer is patchy.

Careers Wales have delivered a tailored work experience (TWE) programme on behalf of the Welsh Government for the last 3 years and placed 878 learners during this time. For the 2023/24 academic year:



- 380 learners completed a work placement.
- 85.6% of these young people went on to a positive destination at the end of the programme
- 185 started a college course, 4 returned to 6th form and 25 young people went on to start an apprenticeship.

Changes in routes post-18

Is there evidence that learners are changing their choices post-18, including a drop in Higher Education enrolments, and if so why?

Between August 2022 and 1st of February 2023: 1,100 Welsh students dropped out of HE. Wales also has the highest level of drop out from Foundation Degree courses.

Those Welsh students dropping out of university will still be liable for the full tuition costs of that year and the Welsh Government do not recoup any of the grant money that they pay out. It could be argued that access to impartial guidance before making such expensive decisions would benefit both the individual and the state.

Two out of five 2nd year students in UK universities, polled by UCAS, would have made different choices if they had received better careers advice.

Very worryingly, Wales currently has the lowest application rate for HE in the UK. Second only to the NE of England.

It could be argued that the drop in applications links to other opportunities rising in popularity e.g. Degree Apprenticeships but the statistics do not support this presumption. Worryingly, the drop in HE applications can mostly be seen amongst those young people from deprived areas of Wales. Universities Wales wrote in August 2024 that “The future of the Welsh economy depends upon the nation being sufficiently equipped to capitalise on industrial, digital and societal developments, with increasing demand for graduate level skills. If Welsh people are not gaining these skills Wales’ economy will find itself at an economic disadvantage compared to the rest of the UK.”

Despite the Welsh Government offering the most generous maintenance packages in the UK, it still leaves Welsh students £6,482 short of the £18,600 required for a reasonable standard of living. Our FE / sixth form leavers need impartial guidance to make the very best-informed career-related decisions.



Welsh-medium provision

The availability of post-16 options (both academic and vocational) through the medium of Welsh, and how this impacts on young people's choices.

This information is not routinely collated by Careers Wales, but some careers advisers report that young people in some areas may make decision based on the availability or lack of availability of options in their language of choice. In some areas, there is a lack of opportunity to study specific academic subjects though the medium of Welsh (e.g STEM A-levels), but advisers note that young people would prefer to study these in English in a Welsh medium setting (e.g Welsh/ Bilingual School) rather than and non-Welsh medium setting. The lack of HE opportunities available in these subjects through the medium of Welsh can also influence on their decisions.

Research by the Welsh language commissioner in November 2023:

According to recent research, for Welsh speakers who intend to continue studying in Wales, the opportunity to study in Welsh or bilingually will be an important factor in choosing their next place of study.

Learners' main reasons for not choosing to study subjects through the medium of Welsh were: the perception that their English language skills were stronger and that studying through the medium of English was easier for them; that a subject (or subjects) were not available in Welsh; that their further studies were likely to be in English or that there were better study prospects in English, in their opinion.

When comparing school and college learners with each other, however, there is a big difference between the percentage of subjects that school learners studied through the medium of Welsh (72%) and the percentage that college learners studied through the medium of Welsh (4%).

Equity of access

Are some groups of learners disadvantaged by the current system (e.g. pupils from low-income households, learners with travel needs)?

The Wales Centre of Public Policy report on 'Understanding inequity in tertiary education', highlights the challenges facing young people from more socio-economically deprived backgrounds and states that they are less likely to progress to tertiary education. For example,



young people in receipt of free school meals are a third more likely to become NEET than their peers. The report highlights inequalities based on gender, disability, ethnicity, and country of origin.

Medr will have a key role in tackling the inequalities at post 16 level, with the support of organisations such as Careers Wales, pre-16 educators and stakeholders in making sure that all learners have a fair chance of success.

There are many reports available which site some of the disadvantages young people face with the current systems, these include:

Young Person's Guarantee generation Z series: annual report 2023 | GOV.WALES

- The other main barrier reported was that 21% of young people had never done any work experience.
- Other issues included transport availability and costs, with 79% of respondents sighting it as a making it harder for them to access the job, education or training they want, either sometimes or all the time.
- Young people's experiences with transport tended to be negative. Unreliability emerged as a significant concern, with frequent mentions of services being full, late, out of service, or cancelled without sufficient notice. The cost of public transport, even when discounted through passes, continued to be a point of contention for respondents.
- Transportation emerged as a significant barrier for disabled young people in Wales when accessing jobs, education or training opportunities. 34% of disabled young respondents consistently faced challenges due to transport issues, while half encountered these difficulties occasionally. Disabled respondents were significantly more likely to report dissatisfaction with their work experience in several aspects.
- Practices seen by Careers Wales are increasing difficulty to access post 16 provision as there appears to be differing systems being applied in each local authority. This can restrict the options open to a young person. One local authority may agree to provide transport to a college within their LA area but not outside their area even if the college in another local authority is nearer to the young person's home.

Work experience

- Young people who experienced paid employment or work experience while at school more often gained employment post-school. Receiving support from a vocational education programme or occupational course, or support from a transitional employment programme led to higher rates of employment.
[opportunities_and_barriers_of_diff_employment_models_2020.pdf](#)



- The findings in [Princes Trust Youth Index 2024.pdf](#) show a correlation between circumstances such as being unemployed, being from a low-income background, having a lack of qualifications and being disabled, and having lower Index scores. The data also shows that young women still have an overall Index score that is two points lower than the score for young men.
- Of these factors, the lowest score of 61 was reported by young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET). This is in stark contrast to the score for those who are in employment, education or training, which is nine points higher, and the overall 2024 Index score, which is eight points higher.
- There is also a large gap between the scores for abled young people and disabled young people, which stand at 71 and 62 respectively.
- Young people from poorer backgrounds, who are indicated in this study as those who received free school meals, have an overall happiness and confidence score that is two points lower than that of their more affluent peers. There is a similar gap between the scores for those who did not attain more than five GCSEs graded A-C (or equivalent) and those who did.

Other barriers and frustrations seen by Careers Wales:

- Many colleges have significantly reduced the number of level 1 courses available so young people who start on a taster/vocational access style course often can't progress unless they can jump to a level 2 course. The qualification requirements for a level 2 course are often too challenging for many customers with ALN making engagement and progression limited in FE for those with learning difficulties.
- The inconsistent interpretation of Additional Learning Provision (ALP) is leading to pupils not getting Individual Development Plans (IDPs) in school which impacts on the support they get if they move on to college - Estyn have recently produced a second thematic report on ALNET.
- Young people with behavioural issues are often the most difficult to place. Most Pupil Referral Units end their provision at 16 so young people must leave even if they aren't emotionally ready.
- Young people on EOTAS are significantly more likely to be NEET than other young people. EOTAS NEET = 22.4%, PLASC Destinations NEET = 2.2%



What support is available for learners to improve access (financial or otherwise)?

[Support Finder](#) from Careers Wales is a list of community support services to help customers get a job, learn how to be more confident, get employability skills, or help with money or funding.

Currently there are 64 programmes listed on Support Finder. A customer can search and filter the support and information required by setting preferences relevant to their situation and needs. The tool provides contact and summary information for agencies offering support for 30 focussed areas ranging from childcare to debt and financial issues, employability support to housing support, mental health conditions and more. There are 31 agencies currently listed in Support Finder who offering debt or financial support.

Is there any regional variation in the information and support provided about post-16 across Wales? Are there any particular challenges facing learners in rural areas?

Young people can expect to receive the same quality and service from Careers Wales regardless of which part of Wales they are in.

The service is monitored in terms of productivity, penetration rates as well as quality in the same way, locally, regionally and nationally with agreed key performance indicators and underpinning performance indicators.

We are not collating any data which will confirm/unconfirm regional differences surrounding the information and support provided about post 16 options. However, when we surveyed careers advisers they provided anecdotal feedback on lack of subject choices and transport difficulties in some regions, for example:

- 'I work with some learners from rural areas who are very limited with post 16 options due to the distances they would have to travel to study courses of their choice. JGW+ is also an issue due to the distances young people from rural areas would have to travel.'
- 'Transport is a major challenge. This limits a young person's options. Both my schools are in agricultural areas and there are no agricultural courses that they can access without considerable travel.'



- 'Rurality has huge impact on learners. Accessing basic courses can incur hours of travelling, which deters a large percentage of learners following their desired course or occupational area.'

Are there any other equality issues?

Careers advisers report several issues relating to equity in post 16, these are predominately centred around transport, provision, language barriers and poverty. Some advisers report some college application processes can be challenging without family support or support from a professional.

The following comments were made by careers advisers when discussing this topic:

- Pupils in poverty do not have access to laptops for their own research at home. They often have shared email and phone details with the parent. This causes huge problems with applications.
- I work in a school with a high level of diversity, many languages are spoken and many students are English as an Additional Language. I find that there is a particularly high demand for advice and guidance from Careers Wales. Students may be unable to access support they need at home as parents may not understand the education system themselves. The fact that the schools is biased towards promoting their own sixth form means it's only the Careers Wales service that ensures students are aware of all post 16 options.
- In terms of equality, it is unfair that pupils accessing JGW+ can earn £60-£75 a week regardless of how much their parents earn and those going to college can only get £40 a week which is means tested.

Post-16 destination data

Is there sufficient post-16 destination data collected to understand trends and inform what education institutions deliver? If not, what data is required to fully understand the post-16 landscape?

Careers Wales is contractually obliged to provide the Welsh Government with data on the destinations of pupils from all maintained and special needs schools who are at or above the



school leaving age. Destinations provide a useful snapshot of pupil destinations which informs careers staff in their work with clients, parents, teachers and employers.

The data collected also proves an invaluable aid to partners involved in planning learning, training and employment opportunities. We compile the survey from data supplied to us. We rely on partner institutions sharing student information to provide as full a picture as possible. The results of the destinations survey are published annually on Careers Wales website for all partners to access. The data is ratified by Welsh Government KAS department prior to publication.

This data is a good starting point for understanding trends and informing what education institutions deliver. However, the data is only collated on school students, and therefore there is a gap in tracking college students once they leave their first destination, this accounts for around 57% of the year 11 cohort annually.

Careers Wales have presented the Welsh Government with a prototype of an all-Wales data intelligence hub, which could utilise data from Careers Wales, schools, colleges, local authorities and Department for Work and Pensions. The Welsh Government should consider further development of an all-Wales Data Hub that will inform careers guidance and local authority service provision, allow education providers to consider the appropriateness of their learning offer to fulfil the needs/aspirations of learners, but also inform analysis and evidence for the needs of current and future labour markets and industries.

In addition to this, Careers Wales currently facilitates the 5 Tier Model on behalf of Welsh Government as part of the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, this model is used to track young people between the ages of 16 and 18 through their various destinations. This data is provided to local authorities for strategic planning and supporting young people.

Welsh Government's role

How effective is the Welsh Government's approach to support participation in the full range of post-16 education and training options?

Careers Wales welcomed the 14 – 16 learning guidance that outlines the learner entitlement during Year 10 and 11 and the focus on CWRE and that all learners must be provided with a course of careers education and ensured access to information from Careers Wales.

Careers and work-related experiences (CWRE) is a cross-cutting theme through the Curriculum for Wales for learners aged 3 – 16. Providing young people with CWRE is fundamental for the development of young people's skills for work and life. Careers Wales provide schools with



resources and professional learning to develop their CWRE provision. We welcome the Welsh Governments proposal of developing performance measures that will monitoring achievements against the learner entitlement that will be included in Estyn's inspection of secondary schools from September 2025. Careers Wales welcomes the development of the new skills suite as part of the qualification reform and support the need to develop the skills for work offer.

We also welcome the introduction of 'dedicated curriculum time' for learners to explore post 16 options. This is a considerable step forward and we are eager to understand how this will be monitored across Wales.

Are learners, their families and schools aware of available Wales-wide support and programmes, such as the Young Person's Guarantee?

The Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) provides all young people between the ages of 16 and 24 with the offer of support to gain a place in education, training or an apprenticeship, employment or self-employment. Working Wales, provides support to access programmes such as Job Growths Wales and ReACT+.

Feedback from young people in the National Conversations (phase 3) indicated that more needs to be done to raise awareness of both young people and their parents/carers to the breadth of opportunities available to them. Young people indicated that lack of work experience, financial constraints, mental health, lack of transport and uncertainty around options impacted on their decision making. Whilst Careers Wales play a key role in providing young people and their parents with up-to-date information on all options, there is a need for increased partnership work to ensure all young people access information and experiences. The Careers Pathways Pilot in Ynys Môn highlights the advantage of key stakeholders working together to provide a collaborative approach to presenting information and experiences.

There are currently long waiting lists for places on programmes such as Jobs Growth Wales, however Welsh Government have provided an additional £2million in the current financial year to support this need.



Outcomes from Dr Hefin David MS's 'Transitions to Employment' report.

Careers Wales welcomed the Transitions to Employment report in June 2023 and were pleased to see recommendations linked to areas where Careers Wales can support, specifically around providing CWRE, work experience, targeted work experience and support for ALN young people in accessing Job Coaching.

Until 2015, Careers Wales managed the work experience placing service, where 90% of KS4 were placed. This provision was removed from the remit of Careers Wales by the Welsh Government with the expectation that schools would continue to offer work experience to their learners and risk assess placements themselves. The current offer for young people is fragmented and dependent on individual schools and local authorities funding a vetting service. Careers Wales would support the need to conduct a feasibility study around the demand and appetite of schools and local authorities to re-instate a central work experience placing service.

Useful links:

[YPG National Conversation Research Report ENGLISH](#)

[14 to 16 learning guidance - Hwb](#)

[Young Person's Guarantee generation Z series: annual report 2023 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)