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**IT'S TIME to**  
**celebrate success**

**Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2014**



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## Introduction

### Awards Celebrate Excellence And Outstanding Achievements

Showcasing excellence in skills development in Wales, the awards are organised jointly by the Welsh Government and the National Training Federation for Wales (NTfW), sponsored by Pearson PLC with support from our media partner, Western Mail and WalesOnline.

This awards ceremony brings together the best of learners, employers and training providers, who have shown total dedication and commitment to skills development and business improvement. They represent cutting edge technology in world leading businesses, bespoke Apprenticeship programmes designed to meet the needs of industry and inspiring individual success stories.

The Apprenticeship Awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of learners, employers and providers involved in the delivery of quality Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Jobs Growth Wales programmes across Wales, which are funded by the Welsh Government through the European Social Fund.

These awards have thirteen categories for learners following the Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Jobs Growth Wales programmes; employers and training providers.

A distinguished panel of judges had a very difficult task filtering applications from all parts of Wales before selecting 36 worthy finalists. Irrespective of whether or not they collect an award, all the finalists are winners. Each has an inspiring story to tell, making them true ambassadors for the Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Jobs Growth Wales programmes in Wales.

## Foreword



### Julie James AM

Deputy Minister for Skills & Technology

The Apprenticeship Awards remind us of the incredible wealth of talent that our country has to offer.

We've seen an unprecedented level of interest in this year's awards, with the number of entries at a record high.

Amongst the finalists are some truly exceptional individuals who have excelled in their workplace as well as learning providers and employers who have gone the extra mile in supporting their apprentices and businesses they are working with.

Each of the finalists simply confirms that apprenticeships are the gold standard in vocational training.

For individuals, an apprenticeship can hold as much value as a place at a top university, allowing apprentices to earn whilst they learn and gain skills, knowledge and nationally recognised qualifications.

For a business, they provide long-term benefits in areas such as increased productivity, a workforce that is responsive, committed and motivated.

The Welsh Government, with support from the European Social Fund, regards apprenticeships as an excellent way to build a skilled and competitive workforce, address skills shortages and ultimately strengthen the Welsh economy.

Tonight is a chance for us to celebrate apprenticeships in Wales.

I look forward to meeting all of the finalists and winners and wish you all a very enjoyable evening.



### Arwyn Watkins

Chief Executive Officer  
National Training Federation for Wales

The Apprenticeship Awards Cymru final is the highlight of the year for everyone connected with the delivery of Apprenticeship programmes in Wales. These awards showcase and celebrate the outstanding achievements of those who have exceeded expectations, shown a dynamic approach to learning and demonstrated initiative, enterprise, innovation, creativity and commitment to improve their skills to support the Welsh economy.

Apprenticeships are the gold standard, guaranteeing that employers have at their disposal a talented and motivated workforce with the practical skills and qualifications needed now and in the future.

An increasing number of employers in both the private and public sectors are placing a greater emphasis on growing their own people through Apprenticeship programmes because they can see the benefits to their business.

Congratulations to all the award finalists who are proof of the successful partnership approach to skills development in Wales by employers, apprentices and providers working together to deliver lasting results.

## Award Categories and Judges

### Employability

#### Traineeships

This category showcases the dedication and commitment of those individual candidates who have chosen a Traineeship to enable them to further develop their career prospects or gain employment.

Applicants demonstrated:

- A proven commitment to their involvement in the Traineeships Programme and continued personal development.
- Success in the “distance travelled” to progress to the next stage of their personal development or into employment.
- What the impact of the programme has been on the learner.

#### Jobs Growth Wales

This category showcases the dedication and commitment of those individual candidates who have chosen the Jobs Growth Wales Programme to enable them to further develop their career prospects and/or gain employment.

Applicants demonstrated:

- Proven commitment to continued personal development.
- That they have contributed to the business and provided added value.
- The “distance travelled” to succeed in their chosen field.

### Learners

This category showcases the dedication, commitment and high level of skills of those individual candidates who have chosen the Apprenticeship route to enable them to further their career progression.

Applicants demonstrated:

- Proven commitment to continued personal development.
- Significant contribution to the business and provided added value.
- A high level of skills and/or has contributed significantly to the sector within which they work.
- The “distance travelled” to succeed in their chosen field.

### Employers

This award recognises and celebrates the employer’s commitment to developing their workforce through Apprenticeships and supporting their employees during their training.

Applicants demonstrated how the approach taken by their organisation in the delivery of Apprenticeships:

- Has a focus on the learner.
- Has had a significant impact on learner performance.
- Has seen their apprenticeship programme developed in line with their organisational aims and objectives.
- Has seen them offer additional support and resource (above that expected of a similar sized organisation) to ensure that learners achieve the aims of their apprenticeship programme.
- Has seen them develop an apprenticeship programme which seek to address the additional needs of the wider community.

## Apprenticeship Providers

This award recognises the significant contribution made by learning providers in supporting and delivering apprenticeships in Wales.

Applicants demonstrated how the approach taken by their organisation in the delivery of Apprenticeships:

- Has a focus on the learner.
- Has had a significant impact on learner performance.
- Has seen apprenticeship programmes developed in collaboration with employers to meet their business needs.
- Offers additional support and resource (above the norm) to ensure that learners and employers achieve the aims of their apprenticeship programme.
- Has seen providers develop apprenticeship programmes which seek to address the additional needs of learners and the wider community.

## Apprenticeship Providers – Social Responsiveness

This award recognises best practice in responding to the Welsh Government's cross-cutting themes in the delivery of work-based learning. The cross-cutting themes are: sustainable development; equality and diversity; and Welsh language.

Applicants demonstrated:

- Innovative approaches to promoting/addressing one of the cross cutting themes.
- Evidence of how staff and learners have been engaged.
- Effective partnerships with schools, employers, other agencies and/or third sector organisations to promote one of the cross cutting themes.
- Evidence that there has been a positive impact on individuals' lives.
- Evidence that the best practice has been, or has the potential to be, disseminated or adopted by other stakeholders.

## Judges

Our special thanks go to all of our judges and the validation panel.

Jeff Protheroe (Chair)	Operations Manager	National Training Federation for Wales
Ray Edwards	Director of Sales	Pearson Work Based Learning and Colleges
Pat English	Celtic Newspapers and Commercial Editor	Media Wales
Rhodri Evans	Communications Advisor	FSB Wales
Sian Powell	Head of External Communications & Marketing	Welsh Government
Rhydian Thomas	Senior Campaigns Manager	NIACE Dysgu Cymru
Beth Titley	Policy Manager	Careers Wales

## Validation Panel

Christine Bissex	Head of Enterprise and Employability	Merthyr Tydfil College – University of South Wales
George Chamberlain	Consultant Trainer	Bespoke Training Solutions
Elaine Davies	Locality Lead/Professional Manager	2gether NHS Trust
Jen Davies	General Manager	MLR
John Jones	Operations Support Manager	Warwick Chemicals
Paul Lewis	Benefits and Efficiencies Co-ordinator	Welsh Government
Wyn Owen	Senior Learning and Development Consultant	Beudy
Alastair Robertson	Senior Partner	Q-West Consultants
Paul Robertson	Managing Director	MLR

Host



## Jamie Owen

Broadcaster and journalist Jamie Owen anchors the country's most watched TV News programme BBC Wales Today. He also presents his own talk show for BBC Radio Wales broadcast on Sunday lunchtimes at mid-day.

Jamie's broadcasting career began in London. He quickly became one of the UK's most familiar voices reading the shipping forecast, the news and Today in Parliament on BBC Radio Four.

He has anchored the corporation's live election coverage, referendum results programme and Royal Visits for BBC Wales Television.

Jamie has toured with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales on a number of occasions and narrated Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf for BBC Radio Three.

Away from his live broadcasting work for television and radio, Jamie has made a number of landmark documentary series for the BBC.

Jamie is the author of five books, the most recent 'Around Wales by B Roads and Byways' published by Random House, London.

Jamie has worked extensively abroad for BBC World Service Trust in India, the Middle East and Albania.

## Employability Finalists

### Andrew Lloyd

Traineeships Learner of the Year (Engagement)



Andrew Lloyd - passionate about his job.

### Dewi Evans

Traineeships Learner of the Year (Engagement)



Dewi Evans - surpassed all expectations.

### Nicole Evans

Traineeships Learner of the Year (Engagement)



Nicole Evans – found her ideal job as a chef.

### Ashley Coleman

Traineeships Learner of the Year (Level 1)



Ashley Coleman – motivated to achieve success.

Winner

Winner

### A new job and a new hobby.

A young man with learning difficulties has found a job and a new hobby thanks to work-based learning.

Andrew Lloyd, 19, from Conwy went to learning provider A4e with little direction or focus except knowing that he wanted to work outdoors.

As part of his traineeship, A4e secured him a work placement at Conwy Water Gardens, where his employer found him to be such an asset that they have offered him a permanent position.

Andrew is passionate about his work and has developed a great interest in tropical fish, even starting his own collection.

“I didn’t have much idea of what I wanted to do,” said Andrew. “I’m now really happy and proud of the work I have done and I really enjoy my job at Conwy Water Gardens.”

### Dewi overcomes barriers to secure job he loves.

A teenager with learning disabilities from Tonyrefail has secured a part-time job that he loves, based at South Wales Fire and Rescue service’s headquarters in Llantrisant.

Prospects were not looking good for Dewi Evans, 18, when he left school with no qualifications and, being dyslexic, he had struggled with reading and writing.

But thanks to a dedicated programme for learners with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD), Dewi improved his communication skills. During the Traineeship engagement programme delivered by Itec Training Solutions, he demonstrated tremendous commitment and achieved a City and Guilds qualification in communication.

Following a volunteer placement, he now has a part-time job at the fire service headquarters, working as a cleaner for Clearview Cleaning. He is passionate about the service and is thrilled to be playing an active role in society.

### Traineeship helps Nicole develop a passion for cooking.

A serious back injury unexpectedly helped a young woman from Bangor to discover an exceptional talent.

Nicole Evans, 18, first enrolled at Coleg Menai on a hairdressing course. However, severe back pain because of a spinal injury made hairdressing impossible. Reluctantly she gave up decided to try catering instead.

Starting the Traineeship was like “flicking a switch”, says Nicole and it soon became clear that she had a real talent for cooking. Her flair was recognised at the Anglesey Arms Hotel in Menai Bridge during a placement, and she now works there full-time, developing her skills and gaining qualifications.

Nicole said: “I couldn’t think of a better place to work. As soon as I started catering my life really took off. I had some really difficult times after my accident but the course has given me everything I need.”

### Success in the face of adversity.

A young Cardiff man has shown remarkable commitment to making life better for himself after a very rocky start.

Ashley Coleman, 18, is delighted that his efforts are paying off and has secured an apprenticeship with commercial law firm Darwin Gray.

He was taken out of primary school and home-schooled, then had to leave home at a young age. With no GCSEs and limited prospects, Ashley was determined to work towards some qualifications and worked extremely hard on an engagement programme with ACT Training.

His confidence improved and he secured a placement at Darwin Gray, where he impressed bosses so much they have now offered him an apprenticeship.

Ashley said: “I’m really happy to have finally reached success. My confidence and skills have improved so much and I’m more motivated than ever to achieve a good career.”

## Jobs Growth Wales Finalists

### Nicholas Mckeown

Traineeships Learner of the Year (Level 1)



Nicholas Mckeown – fulfilling his dream.

### Rebecca Cooper

Traineeships Learner of the Year (Level 1)



Rebecca Cooper sees a great future in hairdressing.

### Helen Brickley

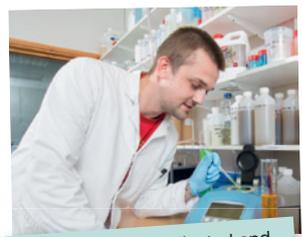
Jobs Growth Wales - Outstanding Achiever of the Year



Helen Brickley – first step towards fashion career.

### Ricky Owen

Jobs Growth Wales - Outstanding Achiever of the Year



Ricky Owen – dedicated and committed employee.

### On the road to success.

A young man from Bangor who believed he would achieve nothing in life is now on the path to fulfilling his dream.

Nicholas Mckeown, 18, went to the Military Preparation College (MPCT) in Bangor aiming to improve his confidence after bullying at school left him with very low self-esteem.

He was barely able to speak in public when he joined but his confidence improved dramatically and he has now applied to be a gunner in the Royal Artillery and has successfully completed all but one exam.

Nicholas said: "These are the first qualifications I've achieved and I'm very proud. I really want to attend future events at MPCT and talk to learners who feel the same way I did. I'd like to reassure them that they are not hopeless and that they too can get an education."

### Superstar in the salon.

A young woman from Holyhead has landed a job she loves through sheer determination and hard work.

Leaving school without qualifications, Rebecca Cooper, 18, decided to try work-based hairdressing training to earn while she learned.

She found her first work placements difficult as she lacked the confidence to deal with clients. However, her sheer determination meant that her attendance at Coleg Menai was excellent and she made quick progression through her qualifications.

She then secured a placement that turned everything around. Jan Barry at Vision Hair Salon connected with Rebecca in a way that nobody had before. She responded to Jan's advice and now deals with customers in a confident, polite and extremely professional way.

Rebecca said: "When I was placed with Jan I began to really see my future in hairdressing."

### Helen hits online sales high.

Helen Brickley turned to Jobs Growth Wales after finding it difficult to get her foot on the careers ladder despite her degree in textiles.

Welsh fashion shop chain Goose Island, through learning provider Talk Training Ltd, took on Helen in October 2013 as a fashion administrator with responsibilities for tracking online sales and updating the website.

A year on, Helen is a full time employee working towards an NVQ in Business Administration Level 3 and completes a daily 80-mile round trip to work from her home in Blackwood to Swansea.

Grateful for the Jobs Growth Wales opportunity, she has taken the company's online sales from an average £150 a month to £7,000 and is now part of buying trips to London and Italy for the online and stores' fashion lines.

### Jobs Growth Wales has turned Ricky's life around.

After more than a year unemployed, 26-year-old Ricky Owen jumped at the opportunity of training with Swansea firm Hydra Technologies Ltd and he has not looked back.

Having been recruited on the Jobs Growth Wales Programme, Ricky has now progressed through a Foundation Apprenticeship in Manufacturing and Operations.

From having basic office administration skills, he has now developed new skills in manufacturing including checking raw materials on delivery, making up products, filling containers for orders, packing and despatching, sample testing and ordering.

His enthusiasm, dedication and commitment are evident; he is one of the first to work in the morning and stays late when necessary.

Ricky said: "This programme has turned my life around."

## Learner Finalists

### Sion Hampson

Jobs Growth Wales - Outstanding Achiever of the Year



Sion Hampson enhanced his future prospects.

### Success on two wheels for Sion.

Sion Hampson is perfectly placed to take advantage of the fact that cycling is one of Britain's fastest growing pastimes as he repairs and refurbishes bicycles for Cardiff charity Pedal Power.

Out of work for three years prior to joining Pedal Power on the Jobs Growth Wales Programme, Sion, 24, started by repairing bicycles and has developed new skills in administration, cost estimation, stock control and online.

Sion, who has overcome several personal barriers, completed the Jobs Growth Wales Programme in March through learning provider Itec Training Solutions and has now been retained as an apprentice in customer service.

"This opportunity through the Jobs Growth Wales Programme has transformed my personal outlook and significantly enhanced my future prospects," said Sion.

### Matthew Edwards

Foundation Apprentice of the Year



Winner

Matthew Edwards – champion butcher selected for Britain.

### Butcher Matthew driven by a quest to be the best.

Talented young butcher Matthew Edwards' quest to be the best has seen him become the champion Welsh Young Butcher and represent Great Britain in a European skills competition in Switzerland last month.

Matthew, 22, who works for S. A. Vaughan Family Butchers, Penyfford, near Chester, secured his place in the GB team as runner up in The National Federation of Meat and Food Traders' 2013 Premier Young Butcher contest.

He is working towards an Apprenticeship in Meat and Poultry Industry Skills with Cambrian Training Company based in Welshpool, having achieved a Foundation Apprenticeship.

"I chose an apprenticeship to further my understanding of butchery and to learn everything I can to help me achieve my goal: to own a butcher's shop and pass on my knowledge to other young, enthusiastic butchers," he said.

### Thomas Woodward

Foundation Apprentice of the Year



Thomas Woodward – wind-powered career.

### Thomas an ambassador for wind energy company's apprenticeships.

Ambitious engineering apprentice Thomas Woodward's career is literally wind powered. He works for wind energy company RWE Innogy UK at the Wind Turbine Service Centre in Llanidloes and is one of just six apprentices selected from 600 applicants in 2012.

Thomas, 21, who lives in Newtown, completed a Foundation Apprenticeship in Performing Engineering Operations last year and has progressed to an Apprenticeship, designed for RWE Innogy UK and delivered by Coleg Llandrillo.

He has made such a good impression that he's an ambassador for the company's apprenticeship programme and has spoken at national renewable conferences and press days.

He aims to become a competent technician within the next year.

### Tomos Kinsey

Foundation Apprentice of the Year



Tom Kinsey – talented identified by John Lewis Partnership.

### Tom destined for a promising career in retail.

With nine GCSE passes under his belt, Tom Kinsey decided to take a different learning route to his friends who had further and higher education in their sights.

Tom, 18, from Newbridge, opted for work-based learning and was selected from 600 applicants for a Foundation Apprenticeship in Retail with the John Lewis Partnership in Cardiff, which was delivered by Acorn Learning Solutions.

Due to his dedication and commitment, he was named the company's Level 2 Apprentice of the Year for the whole of the UK and has now joined the company's branch talent management programme.

Part of the prize for winning the award was an opportunity to spend two weeks at the company's head office in London where he met chairman Sir Charlie Mayfield and attended senior management meetings.

## James Parry

Entrepreneurial and  
Apprentice of the Year



Winner

James Parry with managers Sandra Sexton (left) and Rachel Ellis.

## Neil Meredith

Entrepreneurial and  
Apprentice of the Year



Neil Meredith with Stephen Nicholls, managing director of Complete Core Business Solutions.

## Sophie Gittins

Entrepreneurial and  
Apprentice of the Year



Sophie Gittins – role model for girls in farming.

## Tom Jones

Entrepreneurial and  
Apprentice of the Year



Winner

Tom Jones – expansion plans in the pipeline.

### Exceptional apprentice helps BT save £6 million.

How many people can say they have helped save their employer £6 million? That's what apprentice James Parry did by rearranging work agreements for a team of surveyors to meet a contract deadline, thereby avoiding financial penalties.

Recently seconded to a project management support role with Openreach (BT Group business), James, 20, from Pentre, Rhondda Cynon Taff, mentors apprentices, has become an ambassador for Apprenticeships and is involved in pioneering work.

Having achieved 11 GCSEs, four A levels and one AS level at Treorchy Comprehensive School, he opted for an ICT Telecoms Professional Apprenticeship with BT, which he completed 10 months ahead of schedule with Acorn Learning Solutions.

Now undertaking a part-time degree in Business Management, he aspires to join the Openreach Succession Academy as a future leader.

### Apprenticeship is life changing for engineering manager.

Completing an Apprenticeship in Engineering Manufacture has, in Neil Meredith's own words, changed his life.

The 28-year-old engineering manager thrives on new challenges and that's how he came to work for Complete Core Business Solutions, a contract packing, warehousing and distribution company based in his home town of Abercynon.

Securing a post as maintenance engineer with the company, he completed his Apprenticeship in Engineering Operations with training delivered by VSP/TSW Training and was promoted to engineering manager last December.

Using his knowledge and skills, he worked closely with engineers supplying a new £750,000 production line before overseeing its installation and commissioning in addition to producing a training manual for colleagues.

He is now seeking more qualifications.

### Memorable year for award winning farming apprentice Sophie.

2014 has turned out to be a memorable year for Sophie Gittins, a 20-year-old Mid Wales farmer's daughter.

Not only has she been shortlisted for the Apprentice of the Year award, but she has also been named Royal Welsh Agricultural Society Student of the Year and completed her Apprenticeship in Agriculture, delivered by NPTC Group Newtown campus.

Having achieved 10 GCSEs at Welshpool High School, she went on to complete a Foundation Apprenticeship in Agriculture at NPTC Group before progressing to the Apprenticeship while working on her family's sheep and beef farm at Lower Livior, Berriew.

Next up is a Foundation Degree in Rural Business to prepare her for a farm management role. "I feel I am a good role model for girls wishing to enter the agriculture industry," she said.

### Entrepreneur butcher has sights on business expansion.

Champion Welsh butcher Tom Jones has added entrepreneurial flair to his list of accolades as he seeks to expand his thriving business in Llangollen.

Having been given the task of running Jones' Butchers in Llangollen three years ago, he set about gaining business knowledge and qualifications to give the shop a solid foundation.

He achieved a Foundation Apprenticeship in Meat and Poultry Industry Skills, is working towards an Apprenticeship and aims to progress to a Higher Apprenticeship as he now employs four apprentices.

The business has blossomed. Daily takings have doubled and profits on product lines have increased by more than 30 per cent, resulting in the need for larger premises. Not bad for a young man aged 24 years.

Learner Finalists

**Devon Sumner**

Higher Apprentice of the Year



Winner

Devon Sumner – women in engineering ambassador.

**Luke Godrich**

Higher Apprentice of the Year



Luke Godrich – determined to succeed in his career.

**Daniella Hughes**

Higher Apprentice of the Year



Daniella Hughes – career takes off at Airbus UK.

**Real SFX**

Small Employer of the Year



Winner

Carmela Hargreaves (left) with Danny Hargreaves from Real SFX with Sue Jeffries from Cyfle.

**Devon close to achieving career dream at Airbus UK.**

Devon Sumner has a CV to be proud of. She has met the Queen at Buckingham Palace, taken Prime Minister David Cameron on a tour of her Airbus UK work place and appeared on TV.

Working as a Higher Apprentice with Airbus, Coleg Cambria and Glyndŵr University, the 23-year-old has a string of qualifications that include a distinction in her Foundation Degree in Aeronautical Engineering and an NVQ Level 4 in Engineering Leadership. This year she should achieve a first class Bachelor's Degree with Honours in Aeronautical Engineering and achieve incorporated engineering status with the RAeS.

Devon has won the foundation degree Ede & Ravenscroft Prize at Glyndŵr University and the national EEF Outstanding Achievement Award.

Devon said: "I believe myself to be a great ambassador both for apprentices and women in engineering."

**Apprenticeship helps Luke develop his career.**

Luke Godrich has had to balance his personal life of half-marathon training and shared responsibility for bringing up his seven-year-old daughter Ruby with the demands of an intensive two-year Higher Apprenticeship programme.

Although the 30-year-old has been with the DVLA in Swansea for nine years, it was only in 2012 that he was selected for the company's Talent scheme.

This has involved nine modules at Gower College Swansea leading to an NVQ Level 5 and a CMI Level 5 Extended Diploma. Luke is working towards his CIPD, a qualification for human resource management professionals.

Luke said: "Being a single parent to a beautiful daughter, training for my half-marathons, and my work as an adult learner has meant me having to be organised, disciplined, dedicated and determined to succeed."

**Daniella rewarded for taking the Apprenticeship route.**

High-flying sixth-form student Daniella Hughes turned her back on a university degree course and instead targeted a career with Airbus UK through a Higher Apprenticeship in Supply Chain Logistics.

Six years on, Daniella has a string of qualifications to her name including NVQ Level 2 in Performing Engineering Operations, NVQ Level 3 in Logistics Operations Management and BTEC Level 2 in Supply Chain Management. In August Daniella passed her final module of Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply Level 5.

Hands-on training at Broughton has been complemented by college work at the Management Centre at Coleg Cambria.

Daniella's decision to join Airbus has been vindicated; she was awarded 'Warehousing Learner of the Year 2014' through her logistics NVQ.

**Behind every bang is a safe pair of hands.**

The BAFTA-award winning company Real SFX specialises in fire, explosive, mechanical rigs, model making and soft props for TV, film and the events industry with notable clients including Doctor Who, Sherlock and Casualty.

Safety around live special effects is paramount for this eight-strong Cardiff-based business that has worked with training provider CAVC/Cyfle to develop a specific apprenticeship programme in creative and digital media at their Penarth Road workshop. This has seen three apprentices recruited over the past three years with more in the pipeline.

Company director Carmela Hargreaves said: "The Apprenticeship Programme is embedded into the Read SFX business plan and with the future opening of Pinewood Studios Wales there is huge potential for apprentices to grow with us."

## Tree Frog Creative

Small Employer of the Year



Tree Frog Creative' director Christopher Grice with staff.

### Creative by name, creative by nature.

Tree Frog Creative is a husband and wife run website design business that also offers a wide range of digital marketing solutions.

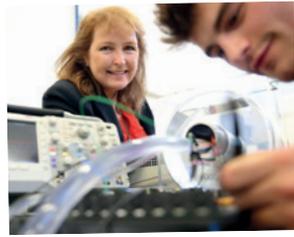
Located in Saltney, Flintshire and set up in December, 2011, owner Christopher Grice and his wife Karen aim to help their customers grow through online business but with an ethical approach that impacts positively on both the organisations they work with and local communities.

Working closely with Coleg Cambria, Chris encourages their two apprentices and a Jobs Growth Wales employee to develop skills through formal training and qualifications and innovative on-going tutoring and self-driven development.

Chris said: "We only take on apprentices if we have identified a career progression. Our plan is to bring in further apprentices to work under our current young team."

## Nemein Limited

Small Employer of the Year



Nemein Ltd's chief executive Suzannah Bourne and apprentice Alex Hughes.

### Bridging the engineering skills gap.

Nemein is an ambitious hi-tech engineering company working predominantly in the energy sector. It develops and manufactures electro-mechanical instruments for the oil and gas industry as well as products for the medical, robotic, automotive and music industries.

Founded by two engineers in 2013, the Pyle-based company has six staff, including an apprentice.

Chief executive Suzannah Bourne said: "We want to invest in sustainable training across a range of engineering skills to bridge a recognised skills gap in the market."

Besides external training, on-the-job development for the apprentice includes job-ready bench-marking, bespoke skills training, mentoring, coaching and practical challenges.

Nemein has a long-term goal to establish an engineering apprenticeship training school, benefiting both the company and the local community.

## Andrew Price Group

Medium Employer of the Year



Andrew Price Salons' Narberth salon manager Rhys John styling the hair of a customer.

### Apprentices the life blood of salon group says owner.

Employees within the hairdressing industry have to be trained to the very highest standards to provide the quality service clients now expect.

Andrew Price Salons has used the Apprenticeship Programme to meet these standards since it was established 26 years ago.

"We have always wanted to have a reputation for providing a high quality service to all our clients at affordable prices and to be at the forefront of technological and artistic advancement.

"Apprentices are the life blood of our business and, through the development of our apprenticeship programme, we are able to nurture the best talent in Welsh hairdressing," said founder and proprietor, Andrew Price.

Over the past four years 88 per cent of apprentices have completed their Foundation Apprenticeship Programme.

## Carmarthenshire

### Construction Training Association Limited

Medium Employer of the Year



CCTAL regional manager Anthony Rees with apprentice Owain Phillips.

**Winner**

### Construction shared apprenticeship success for Carmarthenshire.

Concern about the retention of young people and qualification levels on traditional craft apprenticeships in the county resulted in the Carmarthenshire Construction Training Association (CCTAL) launching a Shared Apprenticeship Programme to address the problem.

After seven years the programme has recruited 140 apprentices of whom 53 are currently employed through the association, with 30 employed in the past 12 months.

Last year, 29 out of 30 apprentices achieved a Foundation Apprenticeship and 26 out of 27 achieved an Apprenticeship in Bricklaying, Carpentry, Electrical, Plastering and Plumbing.

Twenty-three of these have been employed by local contractors, three are in bursary schemes in heritage and one has become a self-employed contractor.

The programme has far exceeded expected outcomes.

## Employer Finalists

### Urdd Gobaith Cymru

Medium Employer of the Year



Urdd's sports director Gary Lewis (centre) with apprentice Liam Higgins (left) and manager Mari Williams.

### Urdd reaping the benefits of apprenticeships.

Urdd Gobaith Cymru is one of Wales' leading children's and youth organisations, providing a range of opportunities through clubs, schools and community groups.

The organisation, which promotes the use of the Welsh language, had not considered an Apprenticeship programme until just over a year ago, believing it would be of no benefit due to the small number of fully trained staff it employed.

However, after introducing a programme the Urdd has grown and developed its range of activities in more community areas.

"We have taken on 10 apprentices over the past year and this has helped us to address youth unemployment. Some of the apprentices are still in school and this allows them the opportunity of employment for when they leave school," said Gary Lewis, the Urdd's sports director.

### City and County of Swansea, Corporate Building & Property Services

Large Employer of the Year



Emma Lewis from City and County of Swansea with apprentices and managers.

### Swansea authority reaping benefits of 'grow our own' policy.

A policy of "growing our own" is providing the investment and inspiration to recruit and train apprentices to develop future capacity and skills at the City and County of Swansea's Corporate Building and Property Services department.

The authority has developed a "cradle to grave" strategy to target apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programmes, ensuring the department has a continual supply of trained staff to deliver services including housing maintenance, window replacement, gas servicing and other maintenance.

Over the past year it has recruited 17 apprentices and has taken on a further 12 for 2014/2015, with 40 apprentices currently working for the authority. Over the past five years, 47 apprentices have been recruited.

The authority has a key objective to achieve and maintain a 10 per cent ratio of apprentice to tradespeople.

### Dunbia (Wales) Llanybydder

Large Employer of the Year



Dunbia's learning and development manager Kay Lewis with apprentices Wyn Hope, Filip Subotowicz and Szymon Taisner.

### Apprenticeships supporting growth of Dunbia.

As one of the UK's largest retail packers in the UK, Dunbia prides itself on employing staff who are not only well trained, but have the ability to support the growth of the business at its facilities in Wales.

The company employs approximately 4,000 people throughout the UK, of which 600 are employed at its Llanybydder site in Carmarthenshire, including 32 apprentices.

It believes its growth and profitability are supported by the quality and training of its Apprenticeship programme.

"We understand that in order to be a successful business with growth potential and providing the best quality products to our clients we have to have a well trained workforce and apprentices are central to this," said Kay Lewis, learning and development manager.

### GE Aviation Wales

Large Employer of the Year

**Winner**



GE Aviation Wales' apprentice co-ordinator Andy Reid with apprentices Scott Bowden and Ben Williams.

### Apprenticeships equip aviation company for the future.

As a global aviation company, Nantgarw-based GE Aviation Wales has to ensure it has well-equipped, trained and qualified employees.

Apprentices are an intrinsic part of the company's fabric, not only ensuring well-trained employees, but encouraging new ideas and the development of procedures that enhance the global business.

The Nantgarw-based company invests more than £1million a year in its Apprenticeship programme, overseen by a permanent member of staff. Over the past 12 months, the company has employed 23 apprentices and currently employs over 150 engineering, apprentices, interns and graduates.

"Apprentices are a vital part of our training programmes which create a dynamic environment, developing our business and maintaining it as a global leader in our field," said Andy Reid, apprentice co-ordinator and shared services leader.

## National Assembly for Wales

Large Employer of the Year



Rhodri Wyn Jones, learner and development adviser, with apprentice Lori Nicholas.

### National Assembly helping young people to earn while they learn.

The National Assembly for Wales began its Apprenticeship programme two years ago with the objective of providing an opportunity for young people to earn while they learn and gain qualifications.

Apprenticeships are part of the Assembly's social responsibility programme and 10 apprentices have been recruited during the past two years. Of the six recruited in the past year, one is based at the Assembly's office in Colwyn Bay.

"All four apprentices from the first cohort have obtained full time posts within the Assembly since completing their Apprenticeship and are considered valued members of the workforce," said Assembly Presiding Officer, Dame Rosemary Butler AM.

Working with learning provider Cardiff and Vale College, the Assembly's Apprenticeship programme targets 16 to 24-year-olds.

## Conwy & Denbighshire Local Service Board

Macro Employer of the Year



Conwy and Denbighshire Local Service Board officials with some of their apprentices.

### Public service organisations make apprenticeships pledge.

Public service organisations across Conwy and Denbighshire have pledged to increase the number and range of Apprenticeship opportunities to not only provide real opportunities for young people in the area but also to enable them to grow their own workforces.

The instigation of an Apprenticeship programme in conjunction with learning provider Grŵp Llandrillo Menai has resulted in a huge cultural shift across the 14 Conwy and Denbighshire Local Service Board partner organisations.

"A wide range of departments are now regularly recruiting apprentices, something they had not really considered before the instigation of the programme. This has had a very positive effect on the organisation and the apprentices themselves," said Annette Hennessey, workforce development project manager.

The LSB has 132 apprentices.

## EE Limited

Macro Employer of the Year



EE Limited's operations manager Claire Litten-Price with apprentices.

### Company taps into energy of apprentices.

EE is the largest digital communications company in the UK, serving more than 27 million customers and employing more than 600 staff at its Merthyr Tydfil contact centre.

The company's Apprenticeship programme was developed in 2012 with The College Merthyr Tydfil with 90 apprentices starting in the first year.

EE wanted to tackle high frontline staff attrition levels, improve its resource pipeline and develop future talent.

The company also knew that around 11 per cent of people aged 18 to 24 in Merthyr Tydfil were on Job Seekers Allowance, providing an opportunity to tap into this group and grow its community support model.

The programme has seen attrition and sickness levels halve, employee engagement levels triple, productivity improve and costs reduce. Absence reduction alone has saved more than £300,000 annually.

## BBC Cymru Wales

Macro Employer of the Year



BBC Wales post production apprentice Rhys Davies at work.

### BBC Wales taps into a creative and dynamic workforce.

The development of the BBC's drama department in Wales meant the organisation needed to tap into a creative and dynamic workforce capable of meeting the standards required in television production.

The establishment of the new Roath Lock production facility in Cardiff resulted in the creation of the Apprenticeship Programme within Drama which has proved a success for the BBC since it was established.

"We needed to develop a way of ensuring we could nurture and develop a local workforce where we had key skills gaps," said Tom Morrey, talent manager at the BBC.

An Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media was established and flexible units for apprentices to undertake were created, working with training provider Cyfle.

## Apprenticeship Provider Finalists

### ACT Training

Provider Award for Social Responsiveness and Apprenticeship Provider of the Year



Winner

ACT's managing director Andrew Cooksley with development manager, Caroline Cooksley.

### ACT helps wide range of learners to realise their potential.

Being socially responsive is at the core of ACT which provides an "open door" culture to training, learning and development.

The Cardiff-based company promotes social inclusion and encourages learners from under-represented groups to support their achievements in training and learning.

The company has provided a range of initiatives that address the Welsh Government's cross-cutting themes on the delivery of work-based learning, including two academies to provide an alternative to mainstream school for young people disengaged with education.

As well as engaging learners at all levels with work-based learning, ACT also instills the importance of social responsiveness, particularly with environmental issues.

ACT provides an engaging curriculum, balancing core qualifications with vocational opportunities.

### Babcock Training Limited

Provider Award for Social Responsiveness and Apprenticeship Provider of the Year



Winner

Karen Buffey and Michael Kent of Babcock Training Ltd.

### Babcock develops learning programmes that produce results.

Babcock Training Ltd believes that in order to increase learners' personal and occupational skills there has to be a continual improvement in their experience to learning.

With more than 1,000 learners in Wales and a key deliverer of Active Leisure Apprenticeships for the Welsh Government, its validated success rates for 2012/2013 were a combined rate of 91 per cent.

Apprentices benefit from the investment Babcock places into its programmes. It has embedded market leading digital learner and support solutions, a bespoke digital platform and intensive pastoral support to deliver impartial information.

A recent employer survey revealed that 95 per cent saw a "significant improvement" in employees' performance due to Apprenticeship programmes.

### Cambrian Training Company

Provider Award for Social Responsiveness and Apprenticeship Provider of the Year



Cambrian Training Company's managing director Arwyn Watkins addressing managers.

### Innovative provider meeting the needs of employers and learners.

Responding to the needs of employers and learners by introducing new Apprenticeship Frameworks to Wales has maintained Cambrian Training Company's status as a leading learning provider.

The Welshpool-based business, winner of a series of national awards over the past decade – including Learning Provider of the Year in the Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2012 – has developed a reputation for innovation, engagement with 450 employers and quality delivery of learning programmes.

Together with partner subcontractors, the company employs around 100 people and has achieved a 91 per cent success rate for completed Apprenticeship Frameworks ranging from Hospitality, Butchery and Food and Drink Manufacturing to Financial Planning Services, Licensed Hospitality, Fencing and Sustainable Resource Management.

### ACT Training

Provider Award for Social Responsiveness and Apprenticeship Provider of the Year



ACT's managing director Andrew Cooksley with learners.

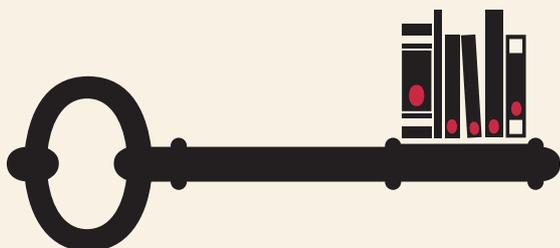
### ACT's creative and innovative approach to learning.

Being creative and innovative is an important part of ACT's approach to the delivery of Apprenticeship programmes that deliver results for the learner and the employer.

From the onset, the company works with employers to engage them in the delivery of programmes, ensuring they are actively involved in what is an important investment for them and their learners.

ACT has developed strategic partnerships with NatWest, Barclays, Deloittes and the Chamber of Trade to actively promote its services through them to businesses. This includes events to engage directly with employers and jointly branded materials and marketing collateral to raise awareness.

It has also developed ways to engage learners through the use of mobile technology and fun workshops to ensure they embrace learning.



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Since setting up in 1988, ACT has become Wales' largest provider for Traineeships and Apprenticeships. With five training centres across Wales, offering Work Based learning to over 6,500 people every year.

ACT is one of the most innovative and professional training providers in Wales, making it a first choice partner. We now employ over 350 members of staff across Wales and have also been named in the Sunday Times' Best 100 places to work for in 2014.

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**Website:** www.acttraining.org.uk

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If you haven't considered the value of vocational skills, **IT'S TIME** to think about skills competitions.

For businesses to be successful they must continually assess the skills, knowledge and attitudes of their workforce. Embedding the need for excellence in vocational skills requires businesses to not only support and encourage vocational excellence, but understand how it can be achieved.

Getting involved in WorldSkills UK highlights your organisations's commitment to raising standards in work-based learning. Skills competition activity can help create a real buzz in the workplace, motivating apprentices and employees and inspiring them to push their technical and professional skills to the limit.

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