



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2016

FFEDERASIWN HYFFORDDIANT
CENEDIAETHOL CYMRU
NTFW
NATIONAL TRAINING
FEDERATION WALES

 **Prentisiaethau
Apprenticeships**



UNDEB EWROPEAIDD
EUROPEAN UNION



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

**Cronfa Gymdeithasol Ewrop
European Social Fund**

Contents

Introduction 3

Foreword 4

Julie James, Minister for Skills and Science
Sarah John, Chair of the National Training Federation for Wales

Award Categories 5

Judges 6

Host 7

Wynne Evans

Employability Finalists 8

Cameron Thomas
Cassidy Jones **WINNER**
Leon Proudlock
Angharad Jones **WINNER**
Darren Watts
Rhys Pugh

Jobs Growth Wales Finalists 10

Callum Jones
Marc Pugh **WINNER**
Oliver Chatfield

Learner Finalists 11

Gwilym Bowen Rhys
Niall Perks **WINNER**
Rhys Donovan
Leanne Williams
Maria Brooks **WINNER**
Michael Leach
Adam Harvey
Jamie Stenhoff **WINNER**
Matthew Edwards

Employer Finalists 14

Crimewatch Alarms Limited & CW Electrical **WINNER**
Ken Picton Salon
University of South Wales Child Care Services Department
Arthur J. Gallagher **WINNER**
Little Inspirations
Values in Care Limited
Argos
BT PLC **WINNER**
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water **WINNER**
OP Chocolates
Innogy Renewables UK Ltd

Learning Provider Finalists 18

Chris Hughes, ACT Limited **WINNER**
Lisa Marie Winter, Acorn Learning Solutions
Mark McDonough, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai **WINNER**
Michael Ramsden, Cambrian Training Company

Sponsors 20

Main Sponsor: Pearson
Media Partner: Western Mail and WalesOnline
Award Category Sponsor:
ACT Limited
City & Guilds
ILM
VSP
Dinner Sponsor: Open University
Entertainment Sponsor: Babcock International
Table Sponsors:
Argos
Bridgend College
BT PLC
Cambrian Training Company
Coleg Cambria
Coleg Gwent
Crimewatch Alarms Ltd & CW Electrical
Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
Itec Skills & Employment

Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2016

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, Media Wales.

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

These awards have 10 categories for learners following Apprenticeship, Traineeship and Jobs Growth Wales programmes; employers and work-based learning practitioners.

A distinguished panel of judges had a very difficult task filtering applications from all parts of Wales before selecting 33 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 Apprenticeship and Traineeship programmes in Wales.

Apprenticeship Awards Cymru 2016

Foreword



Julie James AM

Minister for Skills and Science

The Apprenticeship Awards are an excellent opportunity to showcase the wealth of talent we have in Wales.

They reward those who have gone over and above what is expected of them in their contribution to the development of the Welsh Government's Employability and Apprenticeship programmes.

The finalists are either exceptional individuals who have excelled in their workplace, or learning providers and employers who have gone the extra mile in supporting their apprentices they are working with.

What they all have in common is that each finalist confirms and celebrates the fact that apprenticeships are the gold standard in vocational training.

Wales has developed a highly successful apprenticeship programme over the last few years, one built in partnership with Welsh

businesses and with a strong focus on the quality of delivery.

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 strengthen the Welsh economy.

This is why the Welsh Government is committed to creating a minimum of 100,000 all-age apprenticeships over the next 5 years, with a focus on increasing higher level skills and developing skills pathways.

The Apprenticeship Awards offer individuals and organisations recognition and reward for their commitment, hard work, and success – and for us to celebrate apprenticeships in Wales.

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



Sarah John

Chair of the National Training Federation for Wales

The Apprenticeship Awards Cymru final is a celebration of the successful Apprenticeship, Traineeship and Jobs Growth Wales programmes which are delivered to a wide range of industries across Wales.

The highlight of the year for everyone connected with the delivery of these successful programmes, these awards showcase the outstanding and inspirational achievements of individuals, employers and learning providers.

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

Research clearly demonstrates the wonderful contribution that Apprenticeships

make to the Welsh economy, businesses and individuals. They represent fantastic value for money and the National Training Federation for Wales welcomes the Welsh Government's pledge to create a minimum of 100,000 high quality, all-age apprenticeships over the next five years with a focus on increasing higher level skills and developing skills pathways. At a time of significant budgetary challenges, the priority given to Apprenticeship provision is a reflection of the success of the programme.

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

Awards Categories

Employability

Traineeships

This award 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 award 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 award 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.

Work-based Learning Practitioners

Practitioners

This award has recognised the commitment, energy and enthusiasm of work-based learning practitioners, and the key role they play in helping learners to develop workplace skills and succeed in their careers and/or overcome barriers to progression in their learning and their work.

Applicants demonstrated specifically how they:

- Motivate and inspire every learner to achieve their full potential.
- Went ‘over and above’ the requirements of the programmes, qualifications and frameworks they deliver, by using tailored or innovative approaches to learning delivery.
- Have outstanding expertise in teaching and learning and their occupational area, with an in-depth understanding of the needs of employers.
- Are committed to their own personal development and that of their organisation.
- Share their knowledge and expertise with colleagues to help improve the overall delivery of work-based learning.

Judges

Our special thanks go to all of our judges.

Judging Panel

Christine Bissex - Chair of the Judging Panel	Head of Enterprise and Employability	The College Merthyr Tydfil
Anthony Rees	Regional Manager	Cyfle Building Skills
Carmela Carrubba	Company Director	Real SFX
Hannah Williams	Talent Manager – Drama	BBC Cymru Wales
John Jones	Operations Support Manager	Warwick Chemicals
Louise Burnell	Apprentice Coordinator	GE Aviation Wales
Nicola Watkins	Team Leader	EE Limited
Paul Lewis	Benefits and Efficiencies Coordinator	Welsh Government
Wyn Owen	Organisational Development Consultant	WCO Limited



Wynne Evans

Welsh Tenor

Wynne Evans is one of the UK's leading tenors, having sung as a principal with all of the major opera houses and orchestras, including Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, Welsh National Opera and English National Opera.

His vast concert and recital repertoire has included collaborations with many of the nation's premiere ensembles, including The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra and London Symphony Orchestra.

In 2009 Wynne became the face and voice of the multi million pound advertising campaign for one of the UK's leading comparison website GoCompare.com, playing the flamboyant character Gio Compario. Wynne has gone on to make dozens of adverts for GoCompare.com both on Radio and TV and this campaign is one of the most successful ever. Wynne signed a six album deal with Warner Bros. and his first album 'A Song In My Heart' went straight to number one in the Classical Charts, where it remained for seven weeks.

Wynne presents a daily programme on BBC Radio Wales and frequently presents programmes and, indeed, series for BBC 1 Wales, BBC2 Wales and S4C. He is an extremely entertaining, naturally funny, after dinner speaker who is in great demand.

Employability Finalists



Cameron Thomas

TRAINEESHIPS LEARNER OF THE YEAR (ENGAGEMENT)

Only way is up for Cameron.

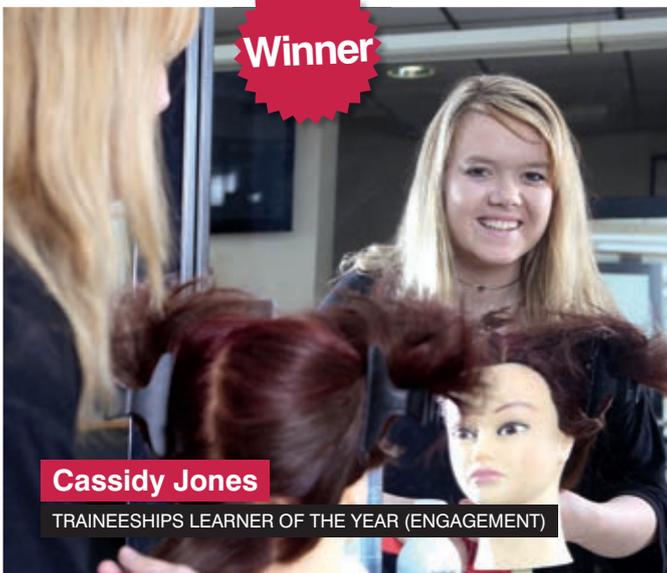
Cameron Thomas is heading for the top at indoor climbing and activity centre Boulders.

Through Cardiff-based Itec Skills and Employment, Cameron started on a Traineeship Engagement programme before progressing to a Level 1 qualification in Customer Service.

His placement at Boulders has led the 17-year-old to additional paid work at weekends and the opportunity to start training as a qualified climbing instructor.

It is a far cry from his early school years, having been excluded at the age of 11 and attending alternative education centres.

“I made mistakes but I love climbing and really enjoy working at the centre,” he said. “I’ve been given a chance to turn my life round.”



Winner

Cassidy Jones

TRAINEESHIPS LEARNER OF THE YEAR (ENGAGEMENT)

Cassidy, a triumph of human spirit.

Cassidy Jones has set her sights on becoming a hair stylist. The 17-year-old has overcome huge difficulties in her life including the death of her father and being bullied.

But she took her interest in salon services at school to the next step through the Traineeship Engagement programme with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and a Level 1 NVQ certificate and Essential Skills qualifications which has seen her shine on work placements that will help her towards a Level 2 qualification.

“For many years, there were bad things in my life that I wanted to stop,” said Cassidy. “Now I want to move on,”

Grŵp Llandrillo Menai’s engagement team leader Eric Christie said: “Working with Cassidy is humbling. What a triumph of human spirit.”



Leon Proudlock

TRAINEESHIPS LEARNER OF THE YEAR (ENGAGEMENT)

Determination helps Leon to achieve his goals.

College training has seen Leon Proudlock go from a nervous teenager with no formal school qualifications to an outgoing, confident young man with an ambition to work in hospitality.

The 18-year-old has to deal with the lifelong battle of having cerebral palsy, coupled with learning difficulties.

Leon has been an outstanding learner at Rhyl College and, following successful completion of the Traineeship Engagement course, has gained a Level 1 Btec in Personal Social Development and Essential Skills Communication.

“I always try my best and believe I am good with people,” said Leon. “College has helped me learn new things and gain in confidence.”

Carys Guy, Traineeships co-ordinator at Rhyl Campus, described Leon as “an absolute star with a good work ethic.”

Winner



Angharad Jones

TRAINEESHIPS LEARNER OF THE YEAR (LEVEL 1)

Angharad excels at practical learning.

Angharad Jones has shown that there are more routes to learning than school exams. Through a Traineeship Engagement programme with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, Angharad found herself on placement at the Plas Arthur Leisure Centre, Llangefni and she has not looked back.

The dyslexic 18-year-old, who was bullied at school and suffered illness during her exams, which meant that they went badly, has achieved Level 1 Certificate in Customer Service, progressed to Level 2 NVQ in Operational Services and her list of leisure centre courses includes instruction in the gym, football, tennis, circuit training and swimming.

Angharad says she loves the way she learns. Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's Eric Christie says she has found a setting to "unleash her potential."



Darren Watts

TRAINEESHIPS LEARNER OF THE YEAR (LEVEL 1)

Darren breaks the mould.

Darren Watts has turned a natural gift of supporting younger siblings and cousins into a promising career.

The 18-year-old has taken the unusual step of moving from a path in the construction industry to childcare, breaking the mould in a predominantly female profession.

Through ACT Limited, Darren successfully completed an Engagement Level Traineeship in Construction, but then retrained in childcare where he has excelled, completing Level 1 Traineeship in Childcare while on placement with Appletree Day Nursery, Cardiff and now moving onto a Level 2 apprenticeship at the nursery.

Darren's long term ambition is to open his own nursery. Jayne McGill-Harris from ACT Limited says he knows what he wants and is happy to "break the mould".



Rhys Pugh

TRAINEESHIPS LEARNER OF THE YEAR (LEVEL 1)

Rhys targets a career in caring.

Rhys Pugh has had to overcome the death of his mum Paula as he follows his dream to become a professional carer.

Four years on, the 17-year-old has found his career path through Coleg Sir Gâr, starting with a Traineeship Engagement programme before completing a Level 1 NVQ certificate in Customer Service and moving on to start a Health and Social Care Level 3 NVQ.

Rhys attributes his new-found confidence to the support of college staff and managers at Coleshill Day Centre in Llanelli where he has been on placement and has built up excellent relationships with staff and service users.

Coleg Sir Gâr's Nicola Julian said: "Rhys is caring, helpful and kind. The managers at Coleshill believe he will go far."



Callum Jones

JOBS GROWTH WALES OUTSTANDING ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR

Dedication helps Callum find a job helping Torfaen communities.

Despite leaving school with only two GCSEs, Callum Jones has demonstrated that there are job opportunities out there for other young people in a similar position if they are dedicated.

Callum, 20, from Penygarn, Pontypool, had been unemployed for a while when he volunteered with Third Sector organisation Torfaen Voluntary Alliance to get work experience.

He made such a good impression after two months that he was offered a receptionist opportunity through the Welsh Government's Jobs Growth Wales programme via learning provider Itec Skills and Employment.

When his programme ended in September last year, he accepted a permanent role with a Foundation Apprenticeship in Business Administration and plans to progress to an Apprenticeship. He hopes his experience will inspire other young people.



Winner

Marc Pugh

JOBS GROWTH WALES OUTSTANDING ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR

Jobs Growth Wales opens door to Marc's dream career.

The Welsh Government's Jobs Growth Wales programme has opened the door to a dream career for Marc Pugh working with horses.

Marc, 20, from Llanfaredd, near Builth Wells, has helped expand the business since joining director Nicky van Dijk's team at Happy Horse Retirement Home at Crai, near Brecon, a haven for retired horses, where he has been promoted to assistant manager.

He has progressed to an Apprenticeship in Horse Care and Riding through the Welsh Government's Young Recruits Programme, has achieved the British Horse Society's stage three qualification and aims to become a qualified riding instructor.

"I've listened to my mentor/trainer Nicky and achieved goals that I thought I could never do," said Marc, a learner with Cambrian Training Company.



Oliver Chatfield

JOBS GROWTH WALES OUTSTANDING ACHIEVER OF THE YEAR

Oliver excels at his job after overcoming personal challenges.

Oliver Chatfield has overcome chronic shyness and social interaction difficulties caused by Asperger's Syndrome to find a job he excels at thanks to the Welsh Government's Jobs Growth Wales programme.

Oliver, 23, from Varteg, Pontypool secured a placement as a general warehouse operative with bathroom supplies company Faucets in Pontypool, through learning provider Itec Skills and Employment.

He had previously struggled with job interviews, but following one-to-one mentoring and training, Oliver is now so proficient at his job that Faucets has retained him and he has progressed to a Foundation Apprenticeship in Warehousing.

Due to his diligence and accuracy, he has helped Faucets improve its order completion rate to 99.5 per cent during a period of increasing turnover.



Gwilym Bowen Rhys

FOUNDATION APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Apprenticeship secures clog-making future.

A 24-year-old man from North Wales has not only completed an unusual apprenticeship, he has helped secure the future of a traditional Welsh art-form.

Gwilym Bowen Rhys, from Bethel, completed his apprenticeship with Criccieth-based clog maker Trefor Owen. With a passion for Welsh music, Gwilym had no previous experience in clog making.

“The apprenticeship was a natural progression from traditional Welsh music for me,” he said. “I wanted to ensure that clog making skills not only continued, but are handed down to future generations.”

Trefor has taught Gwilym the traditional techniques required for production of clogs, using local, sustainably-sourced wood.

The apprenticeship was funded by the Creative and Cultural Skills Sector Council and the training provider was Grŵp Llandrillo Menai.



Winner

Niall Perks

FOUNDATION APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

From fish and chips to flourishing IT career.

Gold medalist Niall Perks from Cardiff took up an apprenticeship when he decided that real-world education was a better choice for him than university.

Since then he has progressed from a part-time job in a fish and chip shop to a promising IT and telecoms career with Cwmbran-based SIPHON.

“I believe that my journey as an apprentice can inspire others to see that university isn’t required to have a successful career,” said Niall, who is working towards a Foundation Apprenticeship in IT Software, Web and Telecoms Professional.

He won gold in the WorldSkills UK heats for Advanced Support Technicians and was learning provider Acorn’s ‘Learner of the Month’ in May out of 1,000 apprentices



Rhys Donovan

FOUNDATION APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Rhys relishes opportunity for local construction apprenticeship.

Rhys Donovan, 23, from Merthyr Tydfil grasped the opportunity offered by his two-year construction apprenticeship to gain qualifications with flying colours and graduate into a valuable career in safety, health and environment.

He had been working as a construction labourer for two years when he saw an apprenticeship advertised with Costain Ltd. He relished the chance to go back to study at Coleg Gwent and gained almost 100% in all of his assessments.

Rhys has been consistently encouraged and supported by his employer and Costain has now recruited him to the role of trainee safety, health and environment (SHE) adviser. This involves further study and training which will provide Rhys with further opportunities to progress up the career ladder.

Learner Finalists



Leanne Williams
APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Determination through adversity leads to flourishing retail career.

Leanne Williams overcame significant personal challenges in completing her retail apprenticeship with ASDA.

Not only did the 31-year-old from Wrexham return to formal learning after a long period, she did so while working full-time and supporting her mum through breast cancer treatment.

ASDA were quick to reward Leanne's determination and she is now a section manager.

"I feel so much more confident in the workplace, however I'm most proud of the success of the other participants in-store," said Leanne, who has recently become a mum. "I hope I have been able to inspire them. If I was to be chosen as Apprentice of the Year, it would show that anything is possible."



Winner

Maria Brooks
APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Passion for learning drives Ford career for Maria.

Working on the production line at Ford gave 28-year-old apprentice Maria Brooks, from Porthcawl, a deep curiosity about how engines were built, operated and controlled. It's this passion for learning that has led her to become the first female adult apprentice taken on at Ford's Bridgend plant.

Already an honours graduate in Forensic Chemistry, Maria's four-year apprenticeship, provided by Bridgend College, will gain her a Higher National Certificate (HNC) in electrical engineering from the University of South Wales. She has also become an ambassador for engineering careers to the next generation.

Maria is also involved in a 'girls into STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)' initiative run by the Engineering Education Scheme Wales in partnership with Ford.



Michael Leach
APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Wind powered career change.

Michael Leach, 31, from Pontypridd was one of the first people to complete the Level 3 Apprenticeship in Wind Turbine Operations and Maintenance in Wales.

This included studying wind turbine technology at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, Rhos-on-Sea and training at an offshore windfarm in Kent with Isofab.

Gaining all possible distinctions and helping others on his course, Michael impressed his managers so much they nominated him for Renewables UK Apprentice of the Year 2015, which he won. He has spoken at Renewables Conference and to MPs at a Wind Awareness event in Parliament.

He is now a wind turbine technician for Vattenfall, working at Pen-y-Cymoedd, the largest onshore wind farm in England and Wales.



Adam Harvey
HIGHER APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Apprenticeships provide springboard for Adam's blossoming career.

Adam Harvey has used the apprenticeship programme as a springboard to develop an exciting career with a Welsh company specialising in products for the pet retail trade.

Since joining Magnet & Steel, Llandow as a general warehouse operative in 2007, he has been promoted through the ranks to operations director due to his contribution to the growing business.

Adam, 28, from Barry, a learner with Itec Skills and Employment, has achieved an Apprenticeship and Higher Apprenticeship Level 5 in Management. He helped write and introduce new recruitment and training policies to reduce staff turnover and costs and was involved in the launch of an award winning 3D product, an all-in-one hand sanitiser and pet bag dispenser, which is now selling worldwide.



Jamie Stenhoff
HIGHER APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Sky's the limit for high-flying Higher Apprentice Jamie.

The sky's the limit for high flying avionic design engineer Jamie Stenhoff who has chosen the apprenticeship route to develop a rewarding career.

When Jamie, 21, from Flint, applied for a Higher Apprenticeship in Advanced Manufacturing Engineering (Wales) Level 4, he went armed with triple distinctions in a BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Engineering from Coleg Cambria and awards from the college and North Wales Society of Engineers.

He's now working for Marshall Aviation Services, Hawarden Airport, Broughton where he recently helped upgrade a complex flight management system on a fleet of 146 series aircraft and aided the project team in saving 123 hours on a Ministry of Defence project by reviewing procedures.



Matthew Edwards
HIGHER APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR

Champion butcher realising life ambition.

Champion butcher Matthew Edwards is on course to realise his ambition of owning and running his own shop after using apprenticeship programmes to hone his skills to the highest level.

The talented 24-year-old from Wrexham, who works for Vaughan Family Butchers, Penyffordd, has won virtually every major prize available to young butchers in Britain since becoming an apprentice, including the 2015 WorldSkills UK butchery competition.

Starting with a Foundation Apprenticeship in Meat and Poultry Industry Skills, he has progressed to a Higher Apprenticeship in Food Manufacturing Excellence Level 4 with Welshpool-based Cambrian Training Company and plans to continue learning.

He now has an apprentice butcher working at the shop, which he runs for two days a week and has exceeded customer and turnover targets.

Employer Finalists

Winner



Crimewatch Alarms Ltd & CW Electrical

SMALL EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Reaping rewards from investing in apprentices.

A family run business for 30 years, Crimewatch Alarms Ltd & CW Electrical based in Newport has placed training and development at the top of its agenda since it was formed.

Founder and managing director Harry Meese recognised the shortage of quality, skilled engineers in the electrical contracting industry and knew in order to produce a high quality workforce it would have to be developed organically within the business.

The apprenticeship programme has expanded as the business has grown and the company opened a training suite with apprentices in mind. Between five and 12 apprentices are employed within the business at any one time working with learning provider Coleg QS.

The company has also provided training to apprentices employed by other contractors and clients.



Ken Picton Salon

SMALL EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Apprenticeships support Cardiff salon.

With at least 25 per cent of its staff training as apprentices at any one time, Ken Picton Salon, Cardiff Bay understands the importance of delivering a good apprenticeship programme.

In 2003, the company decided to set up as a City & Guilds training centre, becoming accredited in 2004, believing that it needed to have control of its own training and development programme.

Over the past five years, it has employed 23 apprentices and currently has nine with a further three starting at the business.

“Our apprenticeship programme is integral to our growth,” said Natalie Hinton, general manager.

The salon believes its success lies in its apprentices. It welcomes 25,000 clients a year and has a client retention rate of 95 per cent.



USW Child Care Services Department

SMALL EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Apprenticeships support staff development.

The University of South Wales (USW) Child Care Services Department introduced an apprenticeship programme to increase promotion opportunities within the business, which provides a day nursery and holiday scheme, employing 21 staff at its Playcentre at Treforest.

The department was keen to help staff to develop their skills and qualifications to enable them to apply for senior positions and also to adapt to a new Care Council for Wales qualification framework.

Over the past five years, 16 staff have been engaged in various apprenticeship programmes. Since the current programme began two years ago, four apprentices have completed training.

“The programme has encouraged staff to develop aspects of nursery life which they might not have felt confident undertaking previously,” said Karen Parker, Child Care Services manager.

Winner



Arthur J. Gallagher

MEDIUM EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Filling a skills gap with worthwhile apprenticeships.

After identifying a skills gap within jobseekers in the financial services sector, Llantrisant-based Arthur J. Gallagher (AJG) embarked on an apprenticeship programme to support recruitment and increase customer service.

As one of the largest insurance brokerage and risk management companies in the world and employing more than 150 people in Wales, training and developing its workforce is crucial to its success.

The company provides three different levels of apprenticeships and currently has 38 apprentices in Wales. In the past five years, 74 employees have completed an apprenticeship.

“Implementing the apprenticeship programme to aid our commitment to enhancing the skills, qualifications and job satisfaction of our workforce has directly contributed to improved customer feedback,” said Mike Jones, regional managing director for AJG in Wales.



Little Inspirations

MEDIUM EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Jenine makes Little Inspirations a learning institute for child care.

Inspirational managing director Jenine Gill considers her award-winning children’s day nursery company, Little Inspirations, to be a learning institute for those looking to develop a career in the child care sector.

The company, which operates from sites in Barry, Llantrisant, Rhydyfelin and Trehopcyn, employs 66 staff providing quality childcare services for children aged from six weeks to 11 years of age. It currently has 20 apprentices and has trained 33 in the last five years.

Jenine leads by example and has created a deep-rooted learning culture in her business, which holds a Flying Start contract. A strong partnership sees training provider Educ8 deliver programmes spanning from Foundation Apprenticeships to Higher Apprenticeships in Playwork, Children’s Care, Learning and Development and Management.



Values in Care Limited

MEDIUM EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Valuing the development of apprentices.

Providing specialist support, care and accommodation for people with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders and complex needs means Values in Care must provide the best possible employee development.

Working with Educ8, employees are encouraged to enrol on apprenticeship frameworks to develop skills required to deliver the quality service expected by the company, which is based in Hengoed, Caerphilly.

The regulatory requirement for Care Providers in Wales is to have at least 50 per cent of care staff qualified or working towards a QCF qualification. Values in Care has 89 per cent.

The organisation supports individuals in 14 different services across South East Wales with 25 apprentices currently working towards their qualifications. In the past five years, it has recruited 60 apprentices.

Employer Finalists



Argos

LARGE AND MACRO EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Apprentices help support retail giant's digital future.

Launching a five-year transformation programme in 2012 to reinvent itself as a "digital retail leader," Argos realised that the succession of staff and filling a retail skills gap would be key to a fast paced expansion plan.

The company worked closely with its learning provider Itec Skills and Employment and others to introduce an apprenticeship programme capable of fulfilling business challenges and expectations as it grew.

"Developing competent, committed and confident employees is the key to maintaining Argos' market position and ensuring that we deliver an outstanding service to all of our customers," said Kirsty Swann, Argos Learning and Development business partner.

"Argos strives to ensure that the apprenticeship qualification provides a great experience for its employees. To do this, the Argos Learning and Development team continually works with stores to gather feedback on the structure they've embedded to ensure it's fit for purpose."

Out of 1,500 apprentices throughout the UK since 2013, 157 of these have been in Wales across 47 stores. The company provides frameworks in retail, team leading, warehousing and ILM management and learners have consistently high framework achievement rates of 88 per cent. An e-learning platform enables all staff access to learning and information.



BT PLC

LARGE AND MACRO EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

More than 50 years creating apprenticeship opportunities.

With more than 50 years' experience of running an apprenticeship programme, BT understands the importance of providing ongoing education and training for its staff.

As one of the world's leading communications companies, BT has to ensure its employees are trained to the highest standards to deliver the services its customers expect.

The company currently employs 91 apprentices in Wales, with plans to take on 71 more this year.

"We're passionate about attracting new talent and giving people opportunities to work and learn and to forge a career in BT which ensures continued growth of the company," said Bob Soper-Dyer, head of BT's Apprenticeship Programme.

Apprenticeships are available in a wide range of roles, from business administration, ICT and engineering and next year BT is introducing cyber security. Working with learning provider Acorn, each apprentice has a structured development path and receives on the job training alongside their academic journey.

More than 96 per cent of apprentices achieve their full apprenticeship and the company has increased the recruitment of females, people with disabilities and those from ethnic backgrounds year on year for the past three years.



Winner

Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water

LARGE AND MACRO EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Creating a flow of opportunities for apprentices and their skills.

Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water has developed an apprenticeship and trainee talent programme to ensure the company is future-proofed when it comes to training its workforce.

In 2011, a programme was introduced with the objective of addressing its ageing workforce and to supplement an emergent talent pipeline.

With more than 3,000 employees, the company appreciates that investment in training and development is critical to ensuring they provide the best possible service to customers.

Each apprentice and trainee has a dedicated on site buddy, as well as development days every six months to focus on personal effectiveness and soft skills training.

The company has a 100 per cent conversion rate of apprentices and trainees that complete their training and move into a permanent post.



OP Chocolate Ltd

LARGE AND MACRO EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Chocolate company tasting sweet success with apprenticeship programme.

Apprentices at OP Chocolates can be assured of sweet success after the company developed an apprenticeship programme with the objective of equipping its employees with the skills needed to progress into senior roles in the future.

Three years ago, the company established an apprenticeship programme and now has 26 apprentices currently employed and has recruited 33 in that time.

Employees have learned about the engineering elements of the machinery, presented to the management team about projects they've been involved in.

Employees who have bought into the apprenticeship programme "have benefited from the new skills and experience," said the company. "Their day to day performance has shown a marked improvement and their confidence increased."



Innogy Renewables UK Ltd

LARGE AND MACRO EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

Energising apprentices into the renewables sector.

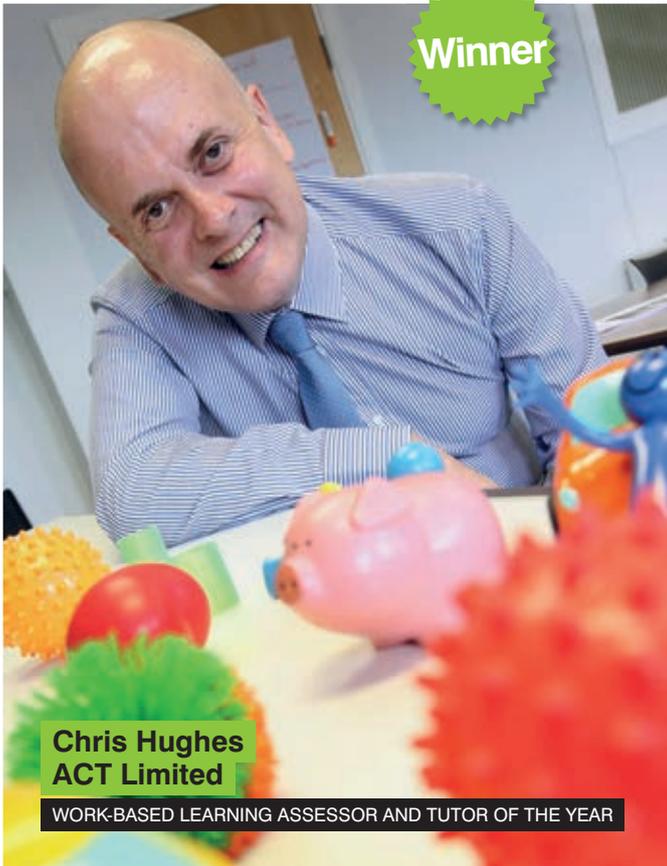
Pressure for more energy in the UK means renewables is one sector where skills and training is vital to ensure the development and safeguarding of such power.

Innogy Renewables UK Ltd, Llandidloes set up its own in-house maintenance department and wanted to develop an apprenticeship programme that met its needs.

Launching the first apprenticeship programme of its kind in Wales, the company ensured it could recruit and train its employees to build and maintain the on and offshore windfarms it operates and is developing.

In partnership with training provider Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, a bespoke training facility was established with the college to provide industry specific resources to enable the apprentices to learn on turbine specific equipment and machines.

Provider Finalists



Inspirational Chris is passionate about helping learners fulfil their potential.

Inspirational Chris Hughes is hoping to go one better in this year's Apprenticeship Awards Cymru after being a runner up for the Work Based Learning Practitioner Award in 2015.

The 55-year-old Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) tutor from Maesycwmmmer, Caerphilly, has worked for award-winning ACT Limited for nearly four years and is highly valued team member.

He has more than 20 years' experience in training and development, which began with Iceland Frozen Foods. Holder of a Postgraduate Certificate in Education, he has recently achieved his Level 5 Coaching and Mentoring qualification and is aiming for the ILM Level 7 in Coaching and Mentoring.

He has written a Management Academy programme for ACT and a Level 5 Coaching and Mentoring programme, both of which are to be launched imminently.

His primary role is to design and deliver training workshops, mark assignments and provides one-to-one support to 180 learners spread across South Wales. He tailors plans and targets from the learner's perspective, is flexible to the needs of employers and produces content, including videos to help learners on ACT's online learning platform.



Role model Lisa delivers financial services sector results for Acorn.

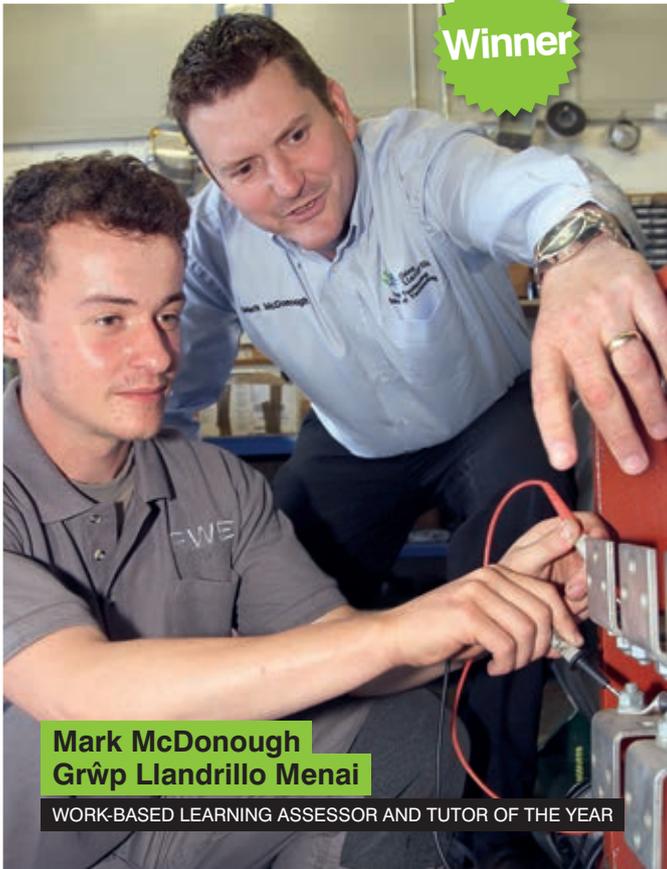
A former learner and now training advisor with award-winning Acorn Learning Solutions, Lisa Marie Winter is a "role model" for the company.

Since she joined Acorn five years ago, an impressive 98% of her learners have achieved apprenticeships within financial services in Wales.

Lisa is one of Acorn's greatest examples of how the company delivers professionally recognised industry qualifications. She has personally completed numerous qualifications to maintain her knowledge of the changing finance and insurance industry and to specifically support her learners in the workplace.

These qualifications include Learning Coach Level 4, Assessor Award Level 3, Practitioners Certificate for Adult Literacy, Chartered Insurance Institute Certificate (CII) and she is now seeking the CII Level 4 Diploma and Internal Quality Assurance Level 4 Award.

Lisa's support for her learners is inspirational. She creates additional learning tools by utilising the CII resources, such as exam syllabus revision guides, quizzes and cue cards and she tailors her coaching and delivery to each individual learner's needs. One of her recent learners Emma Walters was awarded the Chartered Insurance Institute (CII) Apprentice of the Year Award in 2015.



Pioneer Mark delivering skills for wind power sector.

Pioneer Mark McDonough, a work-based learning assessor at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, Rhos-on-Sea, is the man in charge of training the next generation of windfarm technicians.

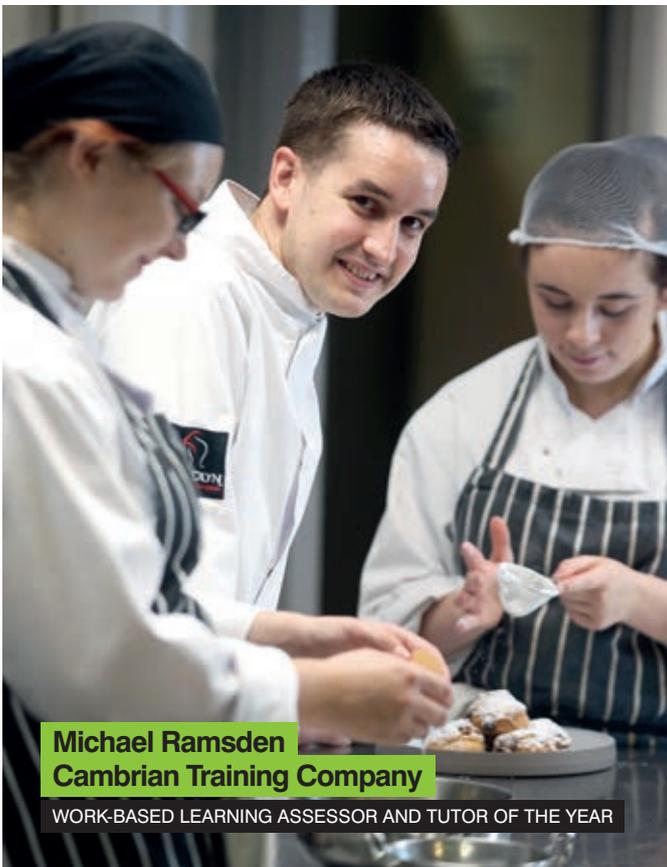
Mark, 36, from Denbigh, set up an award-winning, bespoke Apprenticeship in Wind Turbine Maintenance and Operations in Wales four years ago in partnership with wind power companies Innogy Renewables UK Ltd and Isofab Limited/Vattenfall. He now travels to onshore and offshore windfarms across the UK to assess 21 apprentices.

He joined the college nine years ago after a decade in the manufacturing industry and has achieved a series of assessors' and teaching qualifications.

He was responsible for establishing the Wind Turbine Training Centre at Grŵp Llandrillo Menai, which uses the latest technology to provide a realistic working environment for apprentices with learning materials and resources.

He's one of only a handful of assessors in the UK who can assess the C&G NVQ3 Diploma in Wind Turbine Operations and Maintenance. Two years ago, he utilised an online e-portfolio system to allow continuous feedback and review of the apprentices' work, which has speeded up progress.

This e-portfolio system is being rolled out across the college and awarding bodies are discussing its wider use in qualifications.



Year to remember for talented chef training officer Michael.

Hospitality training officer Michael Ramsden will not forget the year 2016 in a hurry. As well as being a Work-based Learning Assessor of the Year Award finalist, the skilled chef will be competing with Culinary Team Wales at the Culinary Olympics in Germany.

Sadly, he is unable to attend the Apprenticeship Awards Cymru ceremony as both events are held at the same time.

To say that Cardiff-based Michael, 29, who works for Cambrian Training Company and a Culinary Team Wales member, is passionate about his job would be an understatement. He trains and develops young chefs, shares the latest cutting edge culinary techniques and finds them placements in award winning kitchens to boost their skills and experience.

A former apprentice himself, he delivers hospitality apprenticeships and AAA professional cookery and craft cuisine qualifications tailored to meet the needs of chefs and employers, including the Celtic Manor Resort, Newport.

He's now working towards qualifying as an internal verifier and is Cambrian Training Company's lead assessor for the craft cuisine apprenticeship, the gold standard for the industry.



Pearson

We would like to congratulate

all finalists on their
achievements and wish
them good luck for the awards.



Great support to ensure your learners achieve

- An extensive range of qualifications for you and your learners from entry level to level 7 and above in the greatest number of industry sectors
- Support tools and resources to help your qualification delivery including our new digital learning platform, plus SelfSmart, workbooks, delivery guides, ePortfolio, training events and more

Come and see us at the NTFW Conference on 24 November where we will be demonstrating some of our new resources.



Apprenticeships



For more information, visit
qualifications.pearson.com

Saima Tabassum
Telecommunications Assistant

How can I earn and learn and develop my skills?

The answer is **Apprenticeships**

Did you know that you can get skilled, get qualified, get trained up as an apprentice, and get paid at the same time?

Apprenticeships provide young people with a pathway to a rewarding career. That's why the Welsh Government is committed to supporting apprentices in Wales to develop the skills that employers want.

Being an apprentice gives you the opportunity to earn and learn.

You will work for a real employer, earn a salary and work towards a nationally recognised qualification whilst gaining valuable workplace skills and experience.

The Apprenticeship Matching Service matches individuals like you to the right job - you can search and apply online.

Search **Careers Wales Apprenticeships** or call **0800 028 4844**.



Thank you to our sponsors:



Wales' leading training provider

We provide a long list of training programmes and qualifications that really help people reach their full potential.

From Traineeships, Apprenticeship and Higher Apprenticeships across 30 different sectors, to employability training and short commercial courses, we have something for everyone and, this is the good bit, most of our training is fully-funded.

