



Developing higher apprenticeship frameworks for Wales

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- Linda How, Learn to Change, who carried out the research and captured the experiences of framework developers in this Guide.

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1. Introduction

Background to this best practice guidance

- 1.1 Between the publication of the non Statutory version of the Specification of Apprenticeships for Wales, (SASW) and December 2011, ten higher apprenticeship frameworks were published for Wales and ten issued for England, by six Sector Skills Councils and one Standard Setting Organisation.
- 1.2 In view of the importance of higher skills to the Welsh economy, the Alliance Wales was asked by the Welsh Government to explore the reasons for this and to identify opportunities to support development where appropriate. Twenty six framework developers were invited to complete an on line survey between December 2011 and January 2012 and twenty responded. Each was asked to:
- say what their plans were for developing higher apprenticeship frameworks in Wales;
 - say what the main barriers, if any, there are to developing higher level apprenticeship frameworks;
 - summarise the development process for higher apprenticeship frameworks and provide key advice to others on critical factors for successful development;
 - give their ideas about the content of the final SASW, and contribute to the future design of higher apprenticeships in Wales. (This has been passed on to the Welsh Government to inform the statutory version of the SASW and SASW Guidance which was being developed at the time of the survey).
- 1.3 The picture is very encouraging with fifteen out of the twenty framework developers who responded, planning to develop and issue twenty six higher apprenticeship frameworks for Wales at levels 4, 5 or 6 between April 2012 and April 2013. All said that they also were planning to develop these frameworks for England.
- 1.4 Those who said that they were not currently planning to develop higher apprenticeship frameworks were not doing so, either because their sector was not a skills priority or that there were one or more barriers to development.
- 1.5 The objectives of this best practice guide, therefore, are to:
- Capture and share the experiences of twenty framework developers of developing higher apprenticeships in Wales.
 - Explore some of the main barriers to development and highlight the main strategies employed by framework developers to overcome these.
 - Complement and not duplicate, the guidance “**Quality Assurance process to ensure apprenticeship frameworks for Wales are SASW compliant and of quality**”(UKCES/Alliance of SSCs) which can be downloaded from AFO by framework developers and Issuing Authorities.
 - Contribute towards best practice emerging from the higher apprenticeship projects in England ¹.

¹ a workshop was held on the 27 February 2012 to bring together successful bidders to the Higher Apprenticeships Fund in England to encourage networking, helping to establish support groups between similar projects and share approaches to development and best practice and identify any emerging themes

2. Summary of the Welsh Government's policy on higher apprenticeships

2.1 The Welsh Government's Minister for Education and Skills and the Deputy Minister for Skills have both highlighted the importance of higher apprenticeships as an alternative route to higher education for individuals in Wales. The Welsh Government "will continue to promote Apprenticeships as our flagship work-based learning programme"².

2.2 More recently, in his response to the HEFCW Future restructuring of higher education in Wales, the Minister said he believes that "the changes we are considering will raise participation, improve skills and tackle low aspirations through entry to HE".³

2.3 Key strategy documents which stress that higher level skills are critical to the Welsh economy include:

- **Skills that work for Wales: A Skills and Employment Strategy Action Plan 2008.**
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/educationandskills/publications/guidance/skillsthatforwales/?lang=en>
- **Skills for Jobs: The National Strategic Skills Audit for Wales; June 2011.**
Includes a list of the critical, important and medium priority skills for Wales.
<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/nssa-wales-vol-1>
- **Welsh Employment and Skills Board: Skills for Jobs Priorities and High Performance Working; July 2011**
<http://www.wesb.org.uk/about/publicationss/skillsforjobspriorities/?lang=en>
- **The Minister's response to the WESB report on Skills for Jobs Priorities**
<http://www.wesb.org.uk/about/publicationss/responsetowesb2011report/?skip=1&lang=en>

2.4 To summarise:

- There will be a continued focus on apprenticeships, but with further development of progression routes from apprenticeships to Levels 4 – 6 which can include QCF vocational qualifications, or named foundation degrees, HNCs and HNDs.
- Work will continue on improving progression routes into higher education from work based learning such as apprenticeships.
- There will be a more finely tuned bespoke delivery of high level skills - HEFCW is developing a new skills and employability framework for action which will include embedding employability and entrepreneurship skills across all curricula.
- Funding will be provided for enhancing leadership and management capability skills.
- The Statutory SASW makes provision for the development of higher apprenticeships at levels 4, 5 and 6.

² Minister's response to Welsh Skills and Employment Board

³ Press release 29 November 2011.

3. Barriers to developing higher apprenticeships for Wales

3.1 The main barriers to developing higher apprenticeship frameworks for Wales are related to a lack of understanding about where higher apprenticeships fit in with other qualifications amongst employers, apprentices, admissions tutors and professional bodies and difficulties in identifying progression routes.

3.2 This is perhaps not surprising given that higher apprenticeships are relatively new with the first higher apprenticeships introduced in England in 2009 and in Wales in 2010.

3.3 Other barriers faced by framework developers are:

- Lack of evidence about whether higher apprenticeships are needed over and above in-house management training programmes;
- Branding/titling of higher apprenticeships with a reluctance by employers to use the word “apprentice” for frameworks at levels 4,5 and 6.
- Concerns as to the extent of the need for higher level skills or whether the need is additional depth of knowledge to underpin the skills that staff already hold;
- Lack of take up and achievement data for apprenticeships in Wales⁴
- Clarity of funding for part time learners and HEFCW funding required;
- Niche job roles and low numbers of demand working against qualification development;
- Potential lack of support from SMEs.

3.4 The next section highlights how framework developers are overcoming these barriers through their approaches to identifying demand and working with stakeholders, including employers, awarding organisations, professional bodies and higher education institutions.

⁴ Statistical First Release for apprenticeships in Wales due April 2012.

4. Best practice for identifying demand for higher apprenticeships in Wales

Information and intelligence sources

4.1 Framework developers already use a wide range of information and intelligence to inform their skills and qualifications strategies, including higher apprenticeships. These key sources include:

- Labour Market Intelligence for Wales
- Sector Skills Assessments for Wales
- Awarding Organisation data and intelligence
- Skills for Jobs reports from UKCES
- Feedback from providers about employer needs
- Monitoring apprenticeship take up and completion data where this is available.

4.2 The UKCES Evidence Reports (Working Futures, Skills for the Workplace, High performance working etc), are useful source and can be downloaded from

<http://www.ukces.org.uk/publications/evidence-report-list>

- Make use of the Statistical releases for post 16 education and training : **Work Based learning in Wales Excel Table** which includes stats for apprenticeship frameworks.
- Email Post16Ed.Stats@Wales.GSI.Gov.UK for a spreadsheet for apprenticeships which includes gender and age for 2009/10. Following a request from Linda How, on behalf of SSCs/SSOs, they will include apprenticeship ethnicity and disability in the June 2012 release.
Summary data Post 16 Education and Training:
<http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/theme/post16ed/further-educ/?lang=en>
- **Join the Stats Wales update service at** stats.web@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

Mechanisms for identifying demand

4.3 Mechanisms used by framework developers include:

- National Strategic and Regional Employer Fora (Construction Skills)
- Skills Action Groups involving employers, training providers/Awarding Organisation Group and HE (e-skills UK).
- Workforce Planning Model for forecasting demand for skills (Energy and Utility Skills)
- Strategic Employer Network Groups for each industry (Energy & Utility Skills).
- Higher Apprenticeship Multi SSC Project (NAS funded but will be developed for Wales due to demand from Airbus) (Semta).
- Higher Apprenticeship Steering Group with employer, training provider and other stakeholder representation. (The IMI).

- In-depth telephone interviews, an online questionnaire and a number of 1-to-1 face-to-face meetings with employers, training providers, other stakeholders. (The IMI).
- Nation specific consultations (x6) with a range of employers, training providers to understand the detail of the requirements specific to each nation and to identify the level of support. (The IMI).

Key advice from framework developers for developing higher apprenticeship framework for Wales

4.4 Working with employers

- Conduct Welsh Nation specific consultation events and carry out in-depth research with Welsh employers across all business types to ensure there is sufficient demand from employers prior to developing a framework
- Explore with employers how the apprenticeship model compares with existing offers, such as stand-alone qualifications, honours degrees and in-house training programmes.
- Explain the ways in which a higher apprenticeship at levels 4,5 or 6 can add value and help their employees develop their skills, knowledge and occupational competence.
- Promote the message that apprenticeships are “developed by employers for employers “ (Cogent)
- Ensure that employers reach a consensus on the exact job role that the Apprenticeship will underpin.
- Ensure the contents of the framework meet the needs of employers via appropriate levels of consultation on qualifications and framework design.

4.5 Working with HEIs

Note: HE in Wales is currently under review which makes engagement problematic for the time being. There will be a focus on a smaller number of stronger universities in Wales and plans to explore the options for creating a single institution in South-east Wales by merging the University of Wales, Newport, Cardiff Metropolitan University and the University of Glamorgan. A written Ministerial statement can be downloaded from <http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2012/heinsewales/?lang=en>

- Work in partnership with HEIs at the outset for higher apprenticeships at levels 5 and 6 to ensure that qualifications in frameworks provide progression to HE (see Semta case study in Annex A)
- Work with HEIs on a regional basis, wherever possible, to make the best use of scarce resources rather than on a 1:1 basis.
- Avoid stating that frameworks “guarantee” entry to HEI programmes by agreeing a statement for inclusion in the framework with HEIs Admissions Tutors about how the higher apprenticeship will provide access to HEI programmes, which take into account HEI entry criteria

- Explore the commercial benefits which higher apprenticeships can offer for HEIs – e.g. attracting recruits to their programmes, enhancing access to employers, joint design of support materials.
- Work in partnership with HEIs, AOs and large employers to help design the higher apprenticeship so that it provides progression routes which meet employer e.g. BT example to follow from CfA.
- Identify a “first point of contact” or a directory of relevant contacts, with HEIs to ensure messages get through to the right people. Map progression routes from the frameworks and identify equivalencies to existing higher education programmes, then communicate through employers, providers and media.
- Ensure that higher education qualifications used in frameworks are consistent with NOS and therefore, the framework requirements.
- Provide guidance for HEIs, suggesting qualifications as progression routes. Refer to the CfA case study in Annex A.
- Frameworks should be validated with an industry perspective and clear routes to HE and professional accreditation identified.

4.6 Working with Awarding Organisations⁵

- Ensure that the awarding organisation(s) is involved from the outset so that they have a full understanding of the critical role that the Apprenticeship will play in the sector.
- Ensure that qualifications included in higher apprenticeship frameworks provide employers with a choice, as Foundation Degrees do not suit all employers.
- Whilst the uptake on the qualifications may be limited the impact will not be. Run this dialogue concurrently to gathering employer LMI so that employer expectation can be managed should AO timescales not align.

4.7 Working with Professional Bodies

- The key message from framework developers is to engage with Professional Bodies and Chartered Institutes from the outset of the development of higher apprenticeship frameworks. This will help to:
 - build the business case for their support,
 - embed the framework in their competency frameworks leading to professional status
 - gain their support with branding, promotion and the development of CPD products or support materials.
- Seek feedback from professional bodies on draft frameworks.
- Include a statement in the higher apprenticeship framework that apprentices should research which professional body most meets the needs of the employer in their chosen occupation.

⁵ All framework developers have well established links with Awarding Organisations through regular meetings.

- There is evidence that a number of professional bodies recognise that Higher Apprenticeships are a suitable way for professionals in their sector to become fully qualified . Research carried out in May 2011 by PARN ⁶ showed that seventy three per cent of professional bodies were interested in contributing to the development of Higher Apprenticeships in their sector and the majority of respondents thought that Higher Apprenticeships would be an appropriate way to gain full professional status.
- The SASW states that “*Higher apprenticeship frameworks (levels 4, 5 and 6) must state if achievement of the framework has been recognised or endorsed for membership of a relevant professional body*”.

4.8 General Principles:

- Make sure that all levels of the framework under development is visible in the short 100 word description on AFO to enable anyone browsing the framework library can see clearly the level of the frameworks under development
- Include all relevant parties in the development process as early as possible, including training providers⁷, awarding organisations, employers and professional/trade bodies
- Keep those involved with consultations at the outset of the development involved throughout the process of development to ensure the framework requirements are fit for purpose at the delivery end of the development cycle.
- Explore opportunities for working with other framework developers where there are common higher level skills needs. This might encourage AOs to develop qualifications where the market would not be viable otherwise.
- Explore opportunities to work with providers on a regional basis which might encourage providers to develop delivery where the market would not be viable otherwise.
- Seek support from Welsh Government and identify the potential for funding of pilot schemes with specific employers to target learners and pump-prime the new framework to drive uptake in the initial stages of implementation in order to establish it as the benchmark within the sector.
- Keep up to date with the Skills priorities for Wales and where the sector fits in.
- Where a framework includes levels 2 – 5 , explain why the higher level skills are needed in the summary of the purpose of the framework.
- Include weblinks to progression maps, sector/industry careers websites in apprenticeship frameworks.

⁶ Professional Association Research Network May 2011 NAS
<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/the-basics/higher-apprenticeships.aspx>

⁷ Working with training providers is not included separately in this best practice guide as framework developers already have well established mechanisms for consultation about and delivery of, apprenticeships.

5. Best practice for overcoming barriers to entry and widening participation to HE

5.1 Examples of how framework developers are working to remove barriers to entry and widening participation to HE include ⁸

- Keeping entry conditions in the framework flexible and giving examples of alternatives to academic qualifications.
- Stressing the use of initial assessment as a tool to ensure that learning is not duplicated, rather than as a method of screening out or testing the ability of the applicants.
- Consider the wording in the framework which will promote equality and encourage diversity e.g. Cogent states in all of its frameworks “The delivery of the Apprenticeship Framework must be in environments free from prejudice and discrimination where all learners can contribute fully and freely and feel valued”.
- Recognising that pastoral care for level 2 apprentices and mentoring for those at level 3 and above are valuable mechanisms for supporting all apprentices, especially those who are in a minority in the workplace who might otherwise leave the programme early. Note that mentoring to be fully effective is not normally be done by the line manager or those assessing apprentices. Of the 20 apprenticeship frameworks published for England and Wales which include higher apprenticeship pathways , fifteen allocate hours for mentoring off the job. Time allocated ranges from one hour a week, one hour a month, 50 per year and between 48 hours and 154 hours for the whole programme. The remaining five frameworks include general statements that mentoring is one of a number of methods for delivering off or on the job training or mention that this should be included in the off the job training hours.
- Consider how the mentoring entitlement in frameworks will be monitored and evaluated.
- Establishing a diversity profile of apprentices, so that there is baseline data on which to measure progress. The IMI does this on a regular basis (checking with The IMI that it's Ok to mention them
- CIPD recommends the following for supporting apprentices. ⁹:
 - To ensure success, **the apprentice needs to be placed at the heart of the apprenticeship programme** and employers must provide ongoing **support, pastoral care and mentoring** (see Section 8).
 - Employers need to make sure they provide **fair access to their apprenticeship schemes** and widen the talent pool from which they recruit in terms of gender, ethnicity and diversity (see Section 9).

⁸ Sources: Survey of framework developers on developing higher apprenticeships for Wales December 2011 – January 2012 and a review of the twenty higher apprenticeship frameworks published for Wales on AFO.

⁹ <http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/86EA8E62-F078-4B3D-9B90-4BE6562E7E6A/0/5733ApprenticeshipGUIDEWEB.pdf>.

- Make use of ESTYN inspection reports to identify diversity issues with work based learning, including apprenticeships.
- Setting targets for increasing the number of apprentices from diverse backgrounds – see EDIMS targets information in the Construction Skills case study in Annex A
- Work based learning routes which act as an alternative to graduate entry will help to increase the attractiveness of higher level Apprenticeships to those from under-represented groups.
- Increasing professional recognition for people on higher level work based learning programmes can widen the diversity of young people entering the professions.
- Use case studies, video profiles to promote higher apprenticeships to employers and potential apprentices
- Publish progression routes case studies of higher apprentices as they progress through their apprenticeship
- HEFCW has a 'Widening Access' programme which provides some useful background information for increasing opportunities for people from a diverse range of backgrounds to benefit from HE.
http://www.hefcw.ac.uk/policy_areas/widening_access/widening_access.aspx



CfA Business Skills@Work: Supporting higher level skills development in Wales through higher apprenticeships

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Higher apprenticeship (non statutory) frameworks published for Wales as at January 2012	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business and Administration Levels 2,3 4 2. Management levels 2,3,5
Higher apprenticeship frameworks planned or under development for Wales 2012/2013	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact Centre Operations Management 2. Human Resource Management 3. Project Management

<p>1. Why we need higher apprenticeships for Wales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wales has a large number of SMEs whose managers need to know a little about a lot and there was a gap between lower level apprenticeships and higher level skills. • With project management, there are numerous short courses such as Prince 2 available, but it is putting the knowledge into practice which is of greater importance to employers at the higher level. This is where the work based training route offered by higher apprenticeships are valuable. • HR management has a tradition of graduate entry, but some graduates struggle to apply the knowledge in the workplace and develop the skills initially. • Employers value having a work based alternative to graduate entry to meet their higher level skills needs, which, in turn helps to increase the diversity of their workforce.
<p>2. Our processes for identifying demand for higher apprenticeships in Wales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our LMI for each Nation forms the basis for keeping up with the skills needs of employers, which is informed by Government policy. • As a cross sector SSC, we find that if the research shows demand for England, then we do a sense check for demand in other Nations – we have not come across a situation whereby these skills developed for one Nation do not apply to others. • We carried out research to identify employers' views about higher apprenticeships and, whilst there is support for a vocational higher level skills development programme, the titling of Apprenticeships needs to reflect the higher level of the programme contents. As an example, the level 4 pathway in Business and Administration is called the Higher Apprenticeship in 'Business and Professional Administration'.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We set up nation specific formal consultation groups with employers and providers when we are developing and evaluating apprenticeship frameworks.
<p>3. Working with stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers – apart from the Nation specific formal consultation groups about apprenticeship frameworks, we receive regular informal feedback from employers about their skills needs. This is not formally captured at the moment but we are considering how best to do this. Awarding Organisations – we have formal AO forums every three-four months to catch up and to make formal plans for updating and creating qualifications for our apprenticeships. This forum identified that there was low demand from employers for level 4 management qualifications and a higher demand at level 5, therefore, our Leadership and Management higher apprenticeship has no level 4 pathway but a pathway at level 5. CfA has produced guidelines for AOs to help them address our criteria for meeting the knowledge requirements for qualifications in apprenticeship frameworks. Contact Matthew Street for further information. Professional Bodies – are part of the consultation process for developing frameworks to ensure that the content can lead to affiliate entry, contain pathways towards professional status and to get the messaging right about the value of this work based route. e.g. for the Project Management framework we are working with the Association of Project Management and for HR we are working with CIPD. Higher Education Institutions – as there are no common progression routes amongst HEIs, we tend to work with them on a 1:1 basis. However, we have worked through England regional HEI groups such as Linking London which not only provides economies of scale for our consultations, it facilitates access to a group which is working on shared progression routes. We are planning to work with Regional HEI groups who appear not to be considering apprenticeships. CfA has produced guidelines for HEIs to suggest qualifications as progression routes. Contact Matthew Street for further information.
<p>4. Overcoming barriers to entry and widening participation to HE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeships are seen as a vital route to encourage and facilitate a diverse set of individuals entering into management. Entry conditions to our frameworks do not discriminate against any individuals, as they are open and accessible to all potential apprentices. Mentoring is promoted within the Apprenticeship frameworks to provide additional support and increase the chances of apprentices staying. E.G the Business and Administration framework includes 24 GLH off the job for coaching and mentoring for level 2 apprentices, 36 hours for level 3 and 48 for the level 4. The Leadership and Management framework includes 48 for all levels of apprentices. Training providers and employers must also comply with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against in terms of entry to and promotion.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The difficulty is that there is not much data on diversity in apprenticeships for Wales, so we do not have a clear picture for Wales. However, the work based learning statistical first release for 2010/11 is due to be published in April 2012, which will be useful in helping us to understand the diversity profile of our apprentices.
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Construction Skills supporting higher level skills development in Wales through higher apprenticeships

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Higher apprenticeship frameworks planned or under development for Wales 2012/2013	1. Building Control Level 4 2. Construction Site Management Level 5

1. Why we need higher apprenticeships for Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers have called for a minimum of level 3 qualification for years and higher apprenticeships will form part of the apprentices' "journey to competence" which includes, not just job competence but behavioural competence. • The impact of Higher Apprenticeships (HA) is still an unknown quantity but there has been recent work by Construction Industry Council and others investigating industry preferences regarding HA and Foundation Degrees. HA would appear to support the idea of routes supporting a Technical Excellence strategy, but clear messages must be provided to the industry on how these fit in alongside other qualifications, how they are funded and their role in career pathways • With the rising costs of study at university, higher apprenticeships provide a cost effective alternative route to entering our industry. Higher apprentices are potentially more employable than graduates as they should be able to demonstrate competence as well as knowledge.
2. Our processes for identifying demand for higher apprenticeships in Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main mechanisms for identifying demand are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LMI for Wales ○ Qualifications Advisory Committee for Wales ○ Awarding Organisation Forum (UK wide). • Our Standards and Qualifications Validation Committee for qualifications frameworks considers evidence of demand for apprenticeships. • We are currently consulting about our Skills Strategy with industry representatives and stakeholders (on six themes at over 20 separate meetings - including Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland) and a UK wide consultation via a survey. The output will be nation specific action plans. • We are in favour of collaborating with other framework developers on higher apprenticeships (e.g. green deal

	<p>agenda), as there is an opportunity for multi skilling the workforce at this level, coupled with a need to ensure that cohorts are large enough to make programmes financially viable.</p>
<p>3. Working with stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers – are members of the Wales Construction Advisory Group, our Qualifications Advisory Committee for Wales and participate on advisory groups such as Heritage and Sustainability Group, Professional Services Employer Group and three regional Strategic Employer Fora, higher skills and Green Deal • Awarding Organisations – we have a UK wide AO Forum which meets regularly and useful day to day working relationships locally with the WJEC and Agoriad. • Professional Bodies – the Professional Services Employers Group meets regularly with members of key professional bodies such as RCIS, ICE. It acts as a sounding board and captures ideas about qualifications and progression routes towards membership. PB representatives also sit on many other Welsh and UK committees and fora. • Higher Education Institutions – we used to have joint HE/SSC/HEFCW meetings organised by the Alliance of SSCs in Wales which were very useful for communication, discussions and providing an industry voice. There are funding issues which are yet to be resolved for our sector in Wales and in England, therefore, we do not have any higher apprentices yet. We have a couple of pilot higher apprenticeship programmes linked to Leeds University (through Leeds College of Building) and some work is being undertaken on foundation degrees as part of higher apprenticeships with the Middlesex University). • The Professional Services Employers Group is a new forum run by the Welsh Government.
<p>4. Overcoming barriers to entry and widening participation to HE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our frameworks have flexible entry conditions and mentoring is built into the training hours. • “Fairness, Respect and Inclusion” is part of our leadership strategy and we are working on an Equality Standard, together with a Quality Mark scheme which providers will be invited to sign up to and this may well include equality and diversity measures. • EDIMS targets – Equality Data Information Management System is being used for apprenticeships which will help to bring about a more representative balance of gender and ethnicity in our industry. • The Construction Skills Recruitment, Careers and Lifelong Learning Working Group is considering an action plan which will be part of the Skills Strategy, for a long term process to enhance the image of individuals working in the sector at all levels; demonstrating through a variety of media direct to young people (YouTube, FaceBook, etc) that people in this industry are highly skilled and have excellent career prospects.

<p>5. What the benefits of higher apprenticeships are to our employers</p>	<p>Keith Jones, Institution of Civil Engineers Director Wales Cymru.....</p> <p>“Higher Apprenticeships are an excellent way to gain a qualification whilst at the same time gaining Initial Professional Development – learning the skills, knowledge and professional practices on the job. In this way, the apprentices are able to gain practical and technical skills whilst also earning a wage. By linking Higher Apprenticeships to Professional Qualifications, trainees can gain Technician Engineer status with a potential route to further progress to Incorporated Engineer and Chartered Engineer. ICE Wales Cymru supports Higher Apprenticeships in Wales as excellent vocational training.”</p> <p>Rhodri Jones, ceca Wales</p> <p>“The construction industry is keen to ensure that it can offer career opportunities to as wide a cohort of participants as possible, and that ability to climb the career ladder will be further enhanced by the provision of Higher Apprenticeship opportunities”.</p>
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Energy & Utility Skills supporting higher level skills development in Wales through higher apprenticeships

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Higher apprenticeship (non statutory) frameworks published for Wales at January 2012	The Water Industry Levels 2,3,4
Higher apprenticeship frameworks planned for Wales 2012/2013	<i>Working title</i> Systems Operation and Management in the Energy and Utility Sector

<p>5. Why we are developing these higher apprenticeships for Wales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The drive for a low carbon economy is resulting in emerging markets which will offer considerable employment prospects in the energy, utility and environmental sector. Higher-level skills are critical to the development of our industries and to their ability to meet future challenges. This is a sector that has struggled with a poor career image with young people, but which is about to embark on an era of unprecedented jobs growth which could in some areas, such as electrical engineers and wind turbine technicians reach more than 100% of the current workforce. • The ambition and business imperative for the energy, utility and environmental sector is to recruit the estimated 94,000 new recruits needed in the next five years (over 15% of the current sector workforce) to replace an aging technical workforce and, crucially, to enable the rapid introduction of new energy technologies to fulfil society's expectation of a 'green economy'. At least 8,000 new trainees will be needed with around 2,000 of these at Higher Apprenticeship level. • The sector finds that whilst graduates may hold extensive relevant theoretical knowledge, they often lack the skills to apply their learning. Higher Apprenticeships will enable the sector to develop employees with both the higher level skills and knowledge required for full job competence. • There are many academic qualifications at levels 4 – 7 but we have identified a gap in vocational learning for these higher level skills. Our employers are keen to have in place a vocational "ladder of learning" from levels 2 – 6. • 23 occupational roles within the sector are listed on the Shortage Occupation List maintained by the Migration Advisory Committee as the skills requirements of the sector cannot be met solely from within the UK. For example, the managers of off shore wind farms are predominately brought in from Europe but
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	<p>this cannot be sustained long term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We see higher apprenticeships as a valuable way of putting a structured career pathway in place which will help to attract a wider range of people into our industries.
<p>6. Our processes for identifying demand for higher apprenticeships in Wales</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As employer led organisations, EU Skills and the National Skills Academy for Power manage strategic employer network groups for each of our industries. These provide the skills and knowledge that determine our business plan priorities. Each group is chaired by a senior employer representative. • This is corroborated by our 'Workforce Planning model' - a web-based tool which helps individual employers identify, and plan for, their medium to long-term labour and skills needs. Using an employer's own data about their workforce, including their age and skills profiles, the model allows them to assess the impact of retirements, natural wastage and workforce growth on their workforce numbers over the next 15 years and develop recruitment and skills strategies. • The workforce planning model is a powerful tool. During the 2007 Price Control Review the gas distribution network requested spend for Apprenticeships to tackle anticipated skills gaps based on evidence from the model. Ofgem agreed £72m within the regulatory settlement to be ring-fenced for the recruitment and training of Apprentices from April 2008, for five years.
<p>7. Working with stakeholders employers, AOs, PBs and HEIs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers - we engage with employers through the strategic employer network groups and the operational employer groups that feed into these. Working groups are established to address specific initiatives or product development such as Apprenticeships. Wider employer engagement is also invited through relevant EU Skills and stakeholder communication channels. • EU Skills has a dedicated lead for each Industry, with significant industry knowledge and experience. • The National Skills Academy for Power sits at the heart of the Power Sector, driving excellence in skills and bringing together employers, skills organisations and other stakeholders. • Awarding Organisations - qualifications in the sector are employer led and EU Skills maintains close working relationships with the AOs that operate on the sector. We facilitate an AO forum and work with AOs from the outset on NOS and Apprenticeship development. EU Skills works to ensure that employer priorities influence AO development plans and AO representation is invited on operational employer network groups. The relatively low qualification uptake generated by niche job roles in the sector mean it can be challenging to develop qualifications and take them to market in line with employer timescales. • Professional Bodies - Industry leads maintain relationships with professional bodies who we work with from the outset of Apprenticeship development to ensure we understand membership criteria and how the higher apprenticeships can aid progression to associate or full membership. Higher Education Institutions. In the period up until 6 April 2011 our priority was SASW compliance; work with HEIs was limited. Higher Skills are critical for the sector and are we are strengthening relationships with HEIs to support development and delivery of Higher Apprenticeship frameworks.

<p>8. Overcoming barriers to entry and widening participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women and those from black and other ethnic minority groups are underrepresented in technical roles within the sector. • Unfounded social perceptions about the suitability of technical roles for underrepresented groups provide the main barrier to entry - are working with employers to challenge these and other perceptions. EU Skills' careers website has a range of resources – job roles, career planning and other tools for use by potential apprentices, parents, IAG and teaching professionals to support this http://www.euskills.co.uk/careers/careers-homepage/ • The Think Power website managed by the National Skills Academy for Power is aimed at encouraging new entrants from all backgrounds into the power sector • We are part of the Green Ambassadors programme for schools to promote the high tech nature of the sector and the range of exciting career opportunities that exist. This is especially pertinent for the waste management and recycling industry which is generally perceived by the public as low tec. • Our Apprenticeships are open to all applicants and employers are asked to be flexible when recruiting. • There is more flexibility at foundation level where the demands of the framework are less complex, therefore, this pathway would attract those who are interested in working their way up. However, at advanced and higher level, many employers will look for applicants who have gained the Welsh Baccalaureate Intermediate Diploma or above to demonstrate an ability to complete the level 3 and 4 Apprenticeships. • Employers and training providers must have their own equal opportunities policies. • We also recommend that employers conduct an exit interview if apprentices leave in order to learn from the experience. • We have included one hour a month for mentoring apprentices as part of the GLH in the Water Industry framework and plan to do so in all of our frameworks. Higher apprentices, therefore receive 24 hours mentoring over the course of the programme. • Having apprenticeships in place as a vocational route in to the industry has already helped to increase diversity
<p>9. What the benefits of higher apprenticeships are to our employers</p>	<p>“Here at Welsh Water, our business is built on growing talent from within and this is just one of the reasons why our Apprenticeship programme offers a great opportunity for people who possess the right potential, personality and passion to succeed. Bringing Apprentices into the workforce has enabled us to succession plan for the future and grow our workforce, ensuring our very best standards of service are continued to be delivered to our customers”.</p> <p>Lee Williams, Welsh Water</p>



Financial Skills Partnership supporting higher level skills development in Wales through higher apprenticeships

Name	Steven Poss
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Contact details	Steven.Poss@financialskillspartnership.org.uk
Higher apprenticeship (non statutory) frameworks published for Wales as at January 2012	Accounting level 2,3,4 Providing Financial Advice Level 4
Higher apprenticeship frameworks planned or under development for Wales 2012/13	Providing Financial Services - Banking Level 4 Providing Financial Services – Insurance, Level 4 Professional Services – Level 4 (following the issue of England frameworks)

1. Why we need higher apprenticeships for Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job roles in our sector are very technical and there is a demand from employers for these higher level skills. • Professional qualifications are very important, but apprenticeships demonstrate to employers that staff are competent and provide them with an individual with a 'rounded set of skills'. • Apprenticeships are also popular as they provide support from the training provider, rather than students studying alone. • Public and private sector employers in Wales are particularly interested in a level 6 in Accounting, so we will be exploring this with our sector panels.
2. Our processes for identifying demand for higher apprenticeships in Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process we use is fully inclusive and is made up of four strands to feed into our skills and qualifications strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LMI data ○ Awarding Organisation Forum ○ Employer Sector panels (not Nation specific – see next section). ○ Ongoing dialogue with Professional Bodies
3. Working with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers – the main fora are our Sector Panels for Banking, Insurance, Finance and Financial Planning, Pensions, Investments and Accounting. These are not Nation specific as employers prefer to exchange ideas on a sector basis. • Awarding Organisations – we have an AO Forum where the AOs meet regularly to share information about demand and delivery of qualifications which includes apprenticeships. Each AO liaises with its own training providers and feeds in these experiences to the Forum. • Professional Bodies – Chartered status is the goal for those working in any of our sectors and this is tied in with employer appraisal systems. We work with a range of

	<p>Chartered Institutes to ensure that the qualifications contained in our apprenticeships provide exemption from some exams, leading to Associate or full membership status.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher Education Institutions – as Chartered status is key to employers, with the focus on achieving higher level professional qualifications rather than degrees, we have not worked directly with HEIs to date. However, we will be considering how we might do this moving forward.
<p>4. Overcoming barriers to entry and widening participation to HE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The frameworks ensure flexible entry and progression into the professions of all under represented groups and this can support mid-career, career interchange and career returner opportunities which will particularly help to increase the number of women in the workforce. • We include tips on best practice for initial assessment in our frameworks which includes identifying the support needs of apprentices. • We encourage providers and employers to accept alternatives to qualifications when entering onto this apprenticeship to ensure equality of access for people with a learning difficulty. These alternatives include volunteering, employment, portfolio of evidence and non-accredited courses. • We have successfully run the ‘Through the Glass Ceiling’ programme for two consecutive years, helping women to increase their confidence as managers in the workplace. • We are working with Price Waterhouse Coopers on developing a Higher Apprenticeship in Professional Services widening access for apprentices as an alternative route to graduate entry under ‘Fair Access’. It is anticipated that lessons learned from widening access through apprenticeships will apply to PWC across the four Nations. not just England. • Mentoring is encouraged in our frameworks. • Our Careers Website contains video clips showing a range of non stereotypical images for a wide range of jobs in the sector. Working with large employers, FSP promotes “insight days” for school leavers, work experience and apprenticeship opportunities. http://www.financialskillspartnership.org.uk/careers/
<p>5. What the benefits of higher apprenticeships are to our employers</p>	<div data-bbox="647 1491 1355 1962" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Gill commenced studies as an evening student with Kaplan in</p>

	<p>August 2009. It was clear from an early stage that Gill had a flair for accountancy and sailed through her Apprenticeship qualification with no problems whatsoever. During 2010 Gill continued to attend evening classes and as night follows day she attained her Advanced Apprenticeship qualification. Under the guidance of her assessor, Louise Atherton and with the support of her tutors Gill sailed in 2011 to commence her Higher Apprenticeship studies under the new pathway. Gill approached each subject as she had in the past and passed each of the units at the first attempt. With a minimum amount of fuss Gill completed her ICAS project and 2011 concluded with Gill attaining her Higher Apprenticeship qualification.</p> <p>Gill has been a model student during her time at Kaplan and in conjunction with Craig Stevens, (Finance Manager) Joanna Hall, (Training Manager) and the staff at Kaplan it has been a pleasure to oversee a successful journey through the entire programme.</p> <p>Gill is a perfect example of what can be achieved if a student is willing to dedicate themselves to their studies, has the backing of a supportive employer and is willing to listen to the advice of those around them.</p> <p>I am sure that Gill will go on to achieve great things in her career, she has demonstrated during her studies a determination to succeed, self motivation, an air of confidence to achieve. Attributes I know that have been recognised and honed by her employer.</p>
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Semta supporting higher level skills development in Wales through higher apprenticeships

Name	Ian Carnell
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Contact details	icarnell@semta.org.uk
Higher apprenticeship (non statutory) frameworks published for Wales as at January 2012	1. Engineering Manufacture Level 4
Higher apprenticeship frameworks planned or under development for Wales 2012/2013	1. Advanced Manufacturing Levels 4 and 6

1. Why we need higher apprenticeships for Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The manufacturing sector in Wales employs approximately 133,000 people across 6,000 establishments, with over 80,000 engineers, scientists and technologists • Around 22,600 people are employed as technicians, professional engineers and engineering managers and around half of these have a qualification below NVQ level 4 or the equivalent • Wales is a centre of excellence for the aerospace industry with over 160 companies such as Airbus in Broughton North Wales, Babcock in the RAF Valley and British Airways Maintenance in Cardiff, employing in excess of 20,000 people • The key drivers for meeting the higher level skills gaps are the introduction of new working practices, developing new products or services and the introduction of new technologies or equipment. • Around 12% of the current workforce in higher level technical occupations are aged 60 plus. 3,400 higher level technical roles are required between 1012 and 2016 to replace those who are retiring.
2. Our processes for identifying demand for higher apprenticeships in Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semta is part of a consortium of Manufacturing SSCs which includes Cogent, Improve and ProSkills funded by NAS for the development of a higher apprenticeship in England, therefore, this will be rolled out in Wales. • We have updated our LMI and have carried out UK wide and Wales consultation through a number of events to seek feedback on the contents and direction of the framework.. • Training providers were invited to provide details of QCF qualifications they would like to nominate for the technical certificate at levels 4 and 6.

<p>3. Working with stakeholders</p>	<p>Employers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With our SSC partners we have a Higher Apprenticeship Steering Group driven by key employers such as Airbus, BAe, GKN, Jaguar Landrover and Wales based Tata Steel. We have consulted about what employers would like to see in a higher apprenticeship, explaining the equivalences of apprenticeships at QCF levels 1 - 8 and then gone back with a model showing what the apprenticeship might look like. This process has identified that levels 4 and 6 are appropriate, as level 5 tends to have too much managerial content and not enough technical content. This is an iterative process charting the journey of the framework which will lead to improvements and ownership at every stage. • Semta has its own Board made up mainly of employers, and employer regional groups. • Semta use a “development road map” starting with the development of NOS, working with AOs on qualifications and then placing these in the apprenticeship framework. <p>Awarding Organisations – we have a well established Awarding Body Forum and they are a central part of the development road map mentioned above.</p> <p>HEIs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are currently working with Swansea University and Gower College partnership on progression routes from the FD to identify top up elements to achieve a full honours degree. SMEs prefer the FD route with a top up to full honours as this is a more cost effective route for them. • We have a nominated person at Semta responsible for engaging with HEIs on a UK wide basis, but the links for higher apprenticeships are the responsibility of the Apprenticeship Manager. • In England we have strong links with University of Greenwich and UWE <p>Professional Bodies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We use the Engineering Council’s UK SPEC to engage with the professional institutions such as IMechE, Institute of Engineering Technicians, Royal Aeronautical Society. This ensures that the competencies in the higher apprenticeship frameworks meet their requirements for Eng Tech and Incorporated Engineer status.
<p>4. Overcoming barriers to entry and widening participation to HE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aims and objectives in the framework include using the apprenticeship as a mechanism to address diversity issues and those of an aging workforce, to move from a profile which is mainly white, male to one which is more representative of the population. • Flexible entry conditions in the higher apprenticeship means that it opens up access to those who can’t afford to go to University and prefer a work based, vocational route, recognised by the professional institutions • Semta has signed up to the UKRC CEO Charter to step up female recruitment into science, engineering and technology and our employers are committed to diversity in their workforce.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Semta will be monitoring diversity in apprenticeship take up and achievement data as part of the review of the frameworks
5. What the benefits of higher apprenticeships are to our employers	<p>As a result of this new framework Airbus will have highly educated and vocationally competent engineers. This programmes enables us to have a very clear progression route that enables apprentices to start wherever is appropriate to their academic / vocational level, with entry and exit points from level 2 to level 6.</p> <p>The apprentices will have received a broad based learning experience, vocational qualifications and a BEng with Hons. They will also be experienced in a range of activities within the engineering functions, plus IEng with one of the institutions such as the IMechE.</p>