

## Communications and Marketing meeting

**Date:** Tuesday 13 January 2026  
**Time:** 11.0am – 12.30pm  
**Location:** Itec, Itec House, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TT.  
A Teams link was available for those unable to attend in person.

### Attendees:

Venue:

- Karen Smith, NTFW
- Izzy Birkett, ACT
- Vikki Gittens, ACT
- Angharad Roberts, Educ8
- Mary Mann, ITEC Skills and Employment
- Jessica Jones, ITEC Skills and Employment

Joined via Teams:

- George Coulton, Welsh Government
- Rhys Davies, Medr
- Kris Petkova, Cambrian Training
- Tracy Swannick, Cardiff and Vale College
- Hannah Haley, Coleg Cambria
- Gemma Smith, Gower College Swansea

### 1. Welcome and apologies of absence

Karen welcomed everyone and thanked Itec for hosting the meeting.

Organisations not represented at the meeting:

- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
- Skills Academy Wales (NPTC Group) Represented by Coleg y Cymoedd
- B-wbl (Pembrokeshire College)

### 2. Actions from the last meeting

- **Action 1 All:** Send George a brief overview of any potential visits in the run up to and during Apprenticeship Week. Still some opportunities for visits available.
- **Action 2 All:** Send Comms plan to George, before Christmas break. Minister happy with plans and good to see we are all aligned. Received 9 out of the 10.
- **Action 3:** Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Gower College Swansea not present at the meeting. A brief overview to be sent of their activities. This applies when an organisation is unable to send a representative to the meeting.

### 3. NTFW update

#### Skill Competition Wales

Competitions will take place 2-13 February 2026 with a celebration event on 18 March 2026.

#### 11 February 2026

#### Apprenticeships Fair – Senedd, Cardiff Bay

11.0am-2.0pm (setup 9.30am)

All activities must be approved by the Senedd. Approval will also depend on the items required to carry out the activity. We have been advised that power and tables are limited.

The Senedd has asked for a brief overview of the activity and a list of the items by Friday 16 January. Please also state whether a table and power are required.

A template invitation, including a link to the booking form, has been created for you to use when inviting your employers.

#### 4. Welsh Government update

As well as Apprenticeships, George is now responsible for the Flexible Skills Programme, recruitment and training programmes through Business Wales and green skills.

WorldSkills – For those of you who used to liaise with Jess Fenton, Sian or George are now your first point of contact, as Jess has now moved departments.

Campaigns will be paid media, using Meta, LinkedIn, Google and programmatic.

#### **Apprenticeship Week – 9-15 February 2026**

A 2-month campaign aimed at employers started yesterday, this will run until the start of March. Rather than just an awareness raising campaign, looking to generate new leads and conversions, EOI through Business Wales.

New marketing materials have been created, including montage films, case studies, which include priority sectors, and an animation series 'Facts in 15' (for employers and learners).

- YouTube playlist of case studies: [Apprenticeships: Meithrinfa Ffalabalam \(bilingual\)](#)
- Apprenticeship Week content: [Welsh Government Communications Services Digital Toolkit](#)

**Action 1:** George to give an update on the Apprenticeship Week campaign at the next meeting.

Updating the employer guide. This along with more assets will be added to Brandkit prior to Apprenticeship Week.

Press: Two regional articles - Babcock a finalist in the Apprenticeship Awards and the National Botanic Gardens.

Podcast with Business News Wales: Using a mix of priority sectors to show the expanse of apprenticeships - Dinorwig Power Station, Flotek (AI) and Hywel Dda Health Board.

Another piece going out will be Jack Sargeant talking about his apprenticeship experience.

The majority of Ministers and Cab Sec's will be doing visits during Apprenticeship Week. Still looking for a few more opportunities. This doesn't have to be during Apprenticeship Week, it can be prior to or just following.

#### **Medr update for Apprenticeship Week**

Will take a look at the videos and case studies to see what they can use. James will be making a few visits. George said he would share the Minister and Cab Sec's visits with Rhys, as maybe James would like to go along to some of those.

#### **Influencer work:**

- Liam Reardon - Love Island. He was an apprentice in construction and now setting up his own gym.
- Sioned and Fin - Race across the World.

#### **Young Persons Guarantee**

This will be running at the same time and raising awareness of Apprenticeships to learners.

All Welsh Government assets can be found on Brandkit: <https://assets.service.gov.wales/>. (Select 'Economy' and scroll down to 'Apprenticeships')

### **Flexible Skills Programme**

Welsh Government are giving employers 50% off training costs. Anything relating to AI skills or upskilling in AI, it will be 75%. The pilot is available until end of March. EOI through Business Wales.

FSP content: [Welsh Government Communications Services Digital Toolkit](#)

FSP AI press notice: [£2.1 million support to help Welsh businesses adopt AI | GOV.WALES](#)

### **Anti-racist Wales Action Plan**

Looking to increase the number of apprenticeship applications among ethnic minority groups. Assets are being translated into several different minority languages. Religious groups will be one of the channels used for dissemination of the materials.

**Action 2:** George to give an update in regard to this work at the next meeting.

### **Green Skills**

A lot of research currently being carried out around Green Skills.

## **5. Medr Update**

### **New Apprenticeships Framework**

The consultation on the new framework has now closed. A number of engagement events took place that were well attended. Looking to publish the response early next month, if not it will be following Apprenticeship Week.

### **Regulatory consultation closed**

Looking to implement the new tertiary powers by August 2027.

### **Construction Level 2**

Looking to re-instate this qualification, which is one of Minister's key drives. Medr, Qualifications Wales and Welsh Government are working on this. There is only 3-4 months to find a solution.

### **Purdah (Pre-election period)**

Restrictions are in place on new announcements regarding funding, etc. during this period. Rhys will share the information he has received.

**Strategic Development Fund** – £5m on various projects has been awarded across tertiary education. This is around collaboration. Letters have been sent this morning to successful and unsuccessful bids. Given the nature of the funding and the way that it's distributed, the majority of applications didn't involve apprenticeships as it was more colleges, 6th forms and universities.

### **Recruitment:**

James Owen is now CEO and Fran Hillier is the COO.

### **Social Media Channels**

Medr wasn't getting much engagement on X. They are currently using BlueSky, which is working well with academics. LinkedIn is where they get most of their engagement.

Welsh Government are looking at how they can streamline channels. A lot of content is on X and Facebook, which aren't necessarily the right channels. Using TikTok and Instagram for influencer work. Not getting much engagement on the WorldSkills channel so looking to move it to Business Wales.

Coleg Cambria use Facebook to target parents. LinkedIn for businesses and also a lot on TikTok and Instagram. Gower College are similar to Coleg Cambria, Facebook to target parents, TikTok and Instagram for the younger audience. Also use Snapchat but not as much.

Educ8 aren't using X. Itec are still using it but not as much. Cambrian are using X.

ACT still have X but only use it when they are tagged into a post. BlueSky is used but they are not having much interaction with it.

Medr are keen to engage with providers so it would be good to be kept updated on the channels being used. There may also be a potential change of the channels they use with a new government coming into place.

## 6. Round table updates from Members

These updates are important as they help Rhys and George with their reporting. If a representative from your organisation can't be present at the meeting, a brief overview should be sent. This will be included in the notes of the meeting.

**Action 3:** Updates required from Pembrokeshire College (B-WBL), Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and Skills Academy Wales at NPTC Group.

### ACT

- Success Through Skills Awards – Taking place on 5 February, being held at Cardiff and Vale College. Learner, Employer and partner categories.
- Campaign – Employer focused to aid recruitment of apprentices. Also working with bigger employers on having their own apprenticeship programme.
- A priority is Energy and Carbon Management as the uptake has been slow.

### Cambrian Training

- Skills Competition Wales – Hosting 6 hospitality competitions.
- Applications are open for their awards
- Working on assets for Apprenticeship Week – case studies, videos, etc.
- World Chefs Congress – Cambrian are supporting the event which is taking place 16-19 May at ICC.

### Cardiff and Vale College

- WorldSkills UK Finals – Some of the competitions were held at CAVC the last week of November. The medals awarded were:
  - **Gold** - Belal Al Haka - Automotive Body Repair and Daniel James – Network Infrastructure Technician.
  - **Silver** - Oliver Thomas - Heavy Vehicle Technology. In addition, in the SkillBuild UK Finals, CAVC learners Travis Huntley gained Silver and Joseph Burgess won a Bronze both in the Wall & Floor Tiling competition. The 4<sup>th</sup> place was also won by a CAVC Apprentice.

Huge congratulations to all medalists and all 13 CAVC learners who were selected and competed for Team UK in the WorldSkills UK Finals.

- The CAVC awards were held last week and Apprenticeship winners were Logan Sweet, Joseph Burgess and Owen Thomas.
- Work is now taking place on the CAVC Awards ceremony which is held during Apprenticeship Week. This celebrates the achievements of apprentices, employers and practitioners.

### Coleg Cambria

- Holding open events in March across the 6 sites.
- ALN events taking place, which are smaller and quieter.
- Apprenticeship Week – Working on case studies and visiting employers
- Photography being done for use on social media and website.
- Hosting the Association of Colleges conference in January.

### Educ8

- Apprenticeships campaign – A 4-week campaign, launched yesterday. Including social, blogs and case studies. During Apprenticeship Week there will be a focus on the Energy and Carbon Management course.
- Welsh Language Awards launched today, with winners being announced on St. David's Day. Looking for all nominations to be made into case studies.

- Elevate – Educ8’s courses for learners 9-16 years old. Looking to launch the campaign in the summer, this will include taster days and short courses.

### **Gower College Swansea**

- Open evenings being held this week and next. These will take place again in March.
- Apprenticeship Fair on 4 February, this will include around 50 employers, with some having live vacancies.
- Apprenticeship Week - Virtual information sessions are being held during the week – customer service, AAT, digital skills, etc.
- Apprenticeship Awards taking place on 9 February, where James Owen, Medr is their guest speaker.
- Working on case studies – learner and employer focused.

### **Itec**

- Working on case studies that are employer focused for Apprenticeship Week.
- Creating a Welsh phrasebook for assessors and apprentices which is part of their Welsh Language and Culture commitment. Looking at the end of February to start using the draft.
- Attended SkillsCymru and the UK and University Apprenticeship Search – in collaboration with other NTFW members and had a separate stand at Skills Cymru for JGW+.
- Holding a JGW+ Learner Awards.

George is currently working on Green Skills and looking at the key messages to use – carbon neutral, net zero, etc. will speak with ACT and Educ8 on the work they are doing.

### **7. AOB**

No further business was discussed

### **8. Meeting dates for 2026**

- Tuesday 14 April 2026 - ACT
- Tuesday 14 July 2026 - Itec
- Tuesday 13 October 2026 - ACT

A Teams link will be available for those unable to attend the meeting in person.

If you are unable to send a representative to a meeting, please send an update to Karen so it can be included in the notes.