

CAREERS WALES CORPORATE PLAN

2002 - 2005

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Introduction

The Education and Training Action Plan for Wales proposed that the National Assembly for Wales should establish a national all-age information, advice and guidance service - "Careers Wales" - by April 2001. On 1st April 2001 the Careers Wales brand and strategy was launched establishing a national framework for the delivery of an all-age service providing bilingual information, advice and guidance on career and learning opportunities.

The 7 Careers Companies in Wales, now known and branded as Careers Wales, are responsible for the delivery of the statutory Careers Service, the Adult Guidance Initiative and Learndirect, elements of Education Business Links and the Youth Gateway. This delivery will build on the best practices of the Careers Companies and on work previously delivered by Training and Enterprise Councils.

The activities of Careers Wales will be focused on the key goals of the National Assembly's strategic plan for Wales, 'www.betterwales.com' particularly "Better Opportunities for Learning".

Structure

There are 7 Careers Companies in Wales operating under the Careers Wales brand funded by individual contracts with the National Assembly. The company boundaries are consistent, in most cases, with the county council structure that existed when the companies were first established in April 1995. They are:

- ◆ **Careers Wales Cardiff & Vale** (Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan)
- ◆ **Careers Wales Gwent** (Newport, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly East and Monmouthshire).
- ◆ **Careers Wales Powys** (Powys)
- ◆ **Careers Wales North West** (Conwy, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey and the Rhuddlan part of Denbighshire)
- ◆ **Careers Wales Mid Glamorgan** (Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Bridgend and Caerphilly West)
- ◆ **Careers Wales West** (Neath Port Talbot, Swansea, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion)
- ◆ **Careers Wales North East** (Flintshire, Wrexham and the ? part of Denbighshire)

The Careers Wales Association (CWA) was established as a joint initiative of the Careers Companies to raise the national profile of careers guidance, influence the development of relevant national policies and position Careers Wales at the heart of strategic developments related to the achievement of lifelong learning, social inclusion and economic prosperity. Incorporated in

March 2000. CWA is a company limited by guarantee and funded by each of Careers Companies in Wales.

Questions:

Do you feel that you have sufficient information on the Careers Wales Association and its seven Member Companies?

If not what further information do you require?

Assumptions

In developing this Plan, the following assumptions have been made:

1. Resources made available will be sufficient to meet the demands for our services.
2. There will be an increasing demand for our services.
3. There will be increased involvement in European funded partnership projects.

Questions:

Do you agree with the assumptions we have made in developing our plan?

Are there any further factors you feel we need to consider?

Careers Wales Strategic Direction

In synthesising the issues raised in the Education Training Action Plan and 'www.betterwales.com'. Careers Wales has identified its key strategic imperatives as:

Vision

Careers Wales - at the heart of economic and social prosperity

Mission Statement

Developing people through lifelong career planning.

For Wales to be recognised as a learning country, increasing participation in Lifelong Learning must be our priority. It is now well accepted that:

- ◆ Human resource development is central to any strategy for the future.
- ◆ Our people are the sustainable resource of Wales
- ◆ There is a requirement to invest in this "social capital".

We need to enable people to survive and prosper in the new knowledge driven economy by helping them to become more employable.

Careers Wales is now able to offer greater coherence in providing Careers Guidance and the learning experiences available through work experience, mentoring and motivation and business and enterprise awareness. Careers Wales therefore has a vital role to play in meeting the needs of a learning society and in stimulating the growth of the Welsh economy. Our services are a key factor in developing human resources, maximising potential and developing a world-class workforce.

Questions:

Do you agree with our Strategic Direction?

Is our vision for Careers Wales one that you can support?

Do you agree with our Mission Statement?

Does our Mission Statement provide a comprehensive foundation on which to develop the role of Careers Wales?

What action do we need to take both jointly and independently to achieve our Vision and Mission?

STRATEGIC AIMS

EFFECTIVE

TRANSITIONS

To prepare and support individuals to make successful decisions about career and learning opportunities and make effective transitions into education, training and sustainable employment.

SOCIAL

INCLUSION

To raise the aspirations of individuals and to foster a positive approach to participating in learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

ENHANCEMENT

To encourage individuals at all stages of their lives to enhance their knowledge and skills, and employers to develop their staff.

WORKING IN

PARTNERSHIP

To work proactively with a wide range of partner organisations to produce synergy and added value for the organisations and their users.

CAREERS WALES

THE

INFRASTRUCTURE
To ensure that Careers Wales is the high quality market leader in lifelong career planning.

Strategic Priorities

In pursuit of our mission and strategic aims, Careers Wales will contribute to local, regional and national economic and social regeneration by pursuing the following priorities:

Strategic Aim 1 - Effective Transitions

To prepare and support individuals to make successful decisions about career and learning opportunities and make effective transitions into education, training and sustainable employment.

Strategic Objectives

- 1.1 To help individuals acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to plan their career development and make informed choices about the opportunities available.
- 1.2 To ensure coherence between careers education and guidance and the learning experiences provided by education business links and the work related curriculum.
- 1.3 To provide assessment, mentoring and motivational support to individuals in transition and to help place people into suitable education employment and training opportunities.
- 1.4 To contribute to the collection, dissemination and understanding of information on learning opportunities and the labour market.

Is our Strategic Aim on Effective Transitions, clear concise and comprehensive?

What priority actions do you feel that Careers Wales needs to take to achieve this Strategic Aim and its Objectives?

Are our Strategic Objectives on Effective Transitions ones that you can support?

Are there any other Objectives in this area we should consider?

Strategic Aim 2 - Social Inclusion

To raise the aspirations of individuals and to foster a positive approach to participating in learning throughout life.

Strategic Objectives

- 2.1 To promote equality of opportunity across all services and ensure that all Clients are supported effectively and in line with their individual needs.
- 2.2 To provide additional targeted support to the disengaged and individuals with special needs.
- 2.3 To ensure that services and learning experiences provided by Careers Wales are readily accessible to all clients, by working in partnership with communities and local and national agencies.

Is our Strategic Aim on Social Inclusion, clear concise and comprehensive?

What priority actions do you feel that Careers Wales needs to take to achieve this Strategic Aim and its Objectives?

Are our Strategic Objectives on Social Inclusion ones that you can support?

Are there any other Objectives in this area we should consider?

Strategic Aim 3 - Knowledge and Skills Enhancement

To encourage individuals at all stages of their lives to enhance their knowledge and skills, and employers to develop their staff.

Strategic Objectives

- 3.1 To promote actively the economic and social benefits of careers guidance and education business links, and a positive approach to learning and continuous development throughout life.
- 3.2 To influence the provision, and relevance to the labour market, of opportunities in education, training and employment, principally through active participation in local Community Consortia for Education and Training.
- 3.3 To provide in-depth guidance and assessment of skills to enable individuals to acquire the qualifications and skills they need to find suitable employment, progress within their career and to maintain their employability.
- 3.4 To work with employers, particularly small and medium sized employers (SME)s, to foster their commitment to staff development with a particular focus on the low-waged/low skilled.

Is our Strategic Aim on Knowledge and Skills Enhancement, clear concise and comprehensive?

What priority actions do you feel that Careers Wales needs to take to achieve this Strategic Aim and its Objectives?

Are our Strategic Objectives on Knowledge and Skills Enhancement ones that you can support?

Are there any other Objectives in this area we should consider?

Strategic Aim 4 - Careers Wales - Working in Partnership

To work proactively with a wide range of partner organisations to produce synergy and added value for the organisations and their users.

Strategic Objectives

- 4.1 To work with partners to plan and implement activities that support lifelong learning and skills development and also deliver the Extending Entitlement agenda.
- 4.2 To actively work with employers and training providers in raising skill levels in the workforce and increasing the employability of individuals.
- 4.3 To foster and enhance the quality of education business link activities and their relevance to the curriculum through joint working with employers, schools and colleges.

Is our Strategic Aim on Working in Partnership, clear concise and comprehensive?

What priority actions do you feel that Careers Wales needs to take to achieve this Strategic Aim and its Objectives?

Are our Strategic Objectives on Working in Partnership ones that you can support?

Are there any other Objectives in this area we should consider?

Strategic Aim 5 - Careers Wales - the Infrastructure

To ensure that Careers Wales is the high quality market leader in lifelong career planning.

Strategic Objectives

- 5.1 To raise the national profile of careers guidance and education business links, influence policy development and position Careers Wales centrally in relation to strategies for lifelong learning, social inclusion and economic prosperity.

- 5.2 To develop flexible, competent and motivated staff throughout our Careers Wales network of organisations.
- 5.3 To achieve continuous development and improvement within Careers Wales quality strategy and contribute towards raising national quality standards in our sector.
- 5.4 To review the Careers Wales infrastructure and strategic options for the future in the context of the developing needs of Wales.

Is our Strategic Aim on Careers Wales - Infrastructure, clear concise and comprehensive?

What priority actions do you feel that Careers Wales needs to take to achieve this Strategic Aim and its Objectives?

Are our Strategic Objectives on Careers Wales - Infrastructure ones that you can support?

Are there any other Objectives in this area we should consider?

Annex

The Market Assessment

The main factors that have formed the basis of Careers Wales' strategic plans are identified under the following broad headings:

1. Socio/Economic
2. Labour Market
3. Education and Training
4. Equal Opportunities

Socio/Economic Factors

The Economy

Wales' economic performance has been poor for many years. Wales has low economic activity rates and a significant incidence of low skills and qualifications. (*Source - SPD*).

Wales has a small economic base with few large home-grown companies. It suffers from an 'entrepreneurial deficit' and is at least 30% behind the rest of the UK in creating new business. (*Source - Entrepreneurship Action for Wales*).

Average incomes in Wales are amongst the lowest in Great Britain and the share of income made up of social security benefits is disproportionately high. (*Source - Better Wales*).

The draft National Economic Development Strategy calls for the creation of a high skill, high value added economy that will increase GDP and help bridge the wealth gap both within Wales and between Wales and the rest of the UK.

Sociological Factors

The scope and scale of disaffection are extensive. By the age of 14 a significant number of pupils are at risk of disaffection.

The constraints of population sparsity and poor communication also effect access to opportunities. Many of the most poorly qualified have negative expectations and limited aspirations. The result is often disadvantage and social exclusion. (*Source - The Learning Country 2001*),

Labour Market

The Future Skills Wales Survey into the labour market predicted a positive picture of total employment demand within specific sectors of the economy. The Survey also highlighted skill shortages and gaps.

The growth in jobs is expected to be strongest in part-time employment and in jobs traditionally filled by females.

The labour market has changed permanently to a requirement for flexible working with the expectation of frequent job and possibly career change. This demands a commitment to lifelong learning through lifelong career planning.

Employment and Human Resource Development

Employment strategy in Wales is based on three inter-linked objectives: increasing the supply of good quality jobs; improving the skills of the workforce; and helping into work those currently inactive in the labour market.

The services provided by Careers Wales in supporting the strategy will include support for the New Deal initiatives, promoting training opportunities, Youth Gateway, support for workforce development aimed at people in low skilled employment, adult guidance services, the Learndirect information helpline, active participation in People in Communities and Extending Entitlement strategies, the Entrepreneurship Action Plan.

Education and Training

The National Assembly has instituted a massive programme of support, development and change for education and training in Wales.

Pre 16 Education

A number of developments will impact on Careers Wales.

1. The increasing number of pupils following an alternative at Key Stage 4.
2. Strong political direction given to ensuring the academic, technical and vocational learning pathways have parity of esteem.
3. A clearer statutory framework for PSE, Careers and Work Related Education.
4. An interagency approach to promote the importance of essential skills, raise awareness of the need for entrepreneurship, tackling disaffection, promoting the value of qualifications, particularly to boys.

Post 16 Education and Training

A new era for learning post 16 in Wales, designed to widen access, is being created. The mechanisms to promote the changes envisaged in the Education and Training Action Plan are now in place.

1. The National Assembly wishes to see the numbers of participants in post 16 education and training to increase 10,000 annually to 2004 and 12,000 annually from 2004 - 2010.
2. There will be increased application of ICT to bring more people into learning.

3. Acquisition of skills is firmly at the centre of the learning agenda.

4. Policy and programme development must be undertaken on the basis of partnership.

Careers Wales is committed to contributing significantly to regional and local partnerships to achieve the ambitions agenda. We will work closely with ELWa, the Employment Service, the WDA, local Consortia for Education and Training, educational institutions, employers and training providers and voluntary organisations.

Equal Opportunities

Careers Wales recognises there are still many challenges to tackle.

Opportunities in the labour market are still shaped by gender. Sex stereotyping in career choice remains prevalent.

Many disabled people encounter significant barriers to participation in the labour market. Other specific disadvantaged groups include ex-offenders, the homeless and people from the black and ethnic minority communities.

Careers Wales is fully committed to supporting strategies designed to develop an inclusive society where everyone has the chance to fulfil their potential.

In particular we will continue to develop interactive ICT based methods of facilitating easier access to our services.

Do you agree with our market Assessment?

Are there any gaps in our assessment you feel we must consider?

Are you able to add to our analysis?