

Enterprise and Business Committee

APP10

Inquiry into Apprenticeships

Evidence from Job Centre Plus

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Sian Phipps, Clerk
Enterprise and Business Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay, CF99 1NA.

10 April 2012

Dear Sian,

Inquiry into Apprenticeships in Wales

As an organisation Jobcentre Plus is not in a position to respond to all areas highlighted for consideration under terms of reference, as some of the areas are outside our boundaries of expertise.

However, we have compiled the following response in relation to providing effective support for those wishing to find apprenticeships and fully understanding the implications of an apprenticeship in order to influence possible candidates;

In the recent past the perception of apprenticeships has been that they are largely the domain of Welsh Government and Careers Wales and are aimed at young people leaving school. In this sense, whilst Jobcentre Plus personnel have a general awareness of apprenticeships, our role has mainly been to signpost individuals to Careers Wales for a more detailed discussion.

Following the introduction of the Youth Contract by the Westminster Government it has become clear that the more our advisers know about services for young people the better the advice we can give to customers and therefore the greater the contribution apprenticeships can make to the employment landscape in Wales.

In recent months we have attempted to rectify the imbalance in respect of our staff understanding of apprenticeships by producing a comprehensive briefing on the 'Perception and Reality' of apprenticeships in Wales. The idea being, that advisers become more knowledgeable, and are therefore more able to influence potential apprentices.

However, the Committee may also wish to consider innovative ways in which apprenticeships are promoted, and how those responsible for providing effective support for people wishing to start an apprenticeship are themselves better prepared and equipped to encourage take up.

We consider that apprenticeships have an important role to play in supporting the young people agenda in Wales and we will continue to commit to developing our understanding and knowledge in order to encourage better take up.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "June Price". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

June Price