



As we step into the first quarter of 2025, the Cardiff Capital Region Skills Partnership (CCRSP) is proud to highlight the latest activities shaping our region's skills landscape.

Our commitment to driving economic growth and prosperity remains strong, and we are eager to showcase the achievements and initiatives that are making an impact.

Over recent months we have made significant progress in aligning post-16 education with the needs of key industries. Through collaboration with our cluster groups, we have strengthened skills and talent pipelines and supported bootcamp models—deepening engagement between industry, education, and key stakeholders.

In this edition, we spotlight key initiatives fostering skills, innovation, and opportunity, including **Wales Apprenticeship Week 2025** - a vital campaign championing the role of apprenticeships in building a skilled workforce for the future.

We also focus on **Wales Tech Week 2025**, uniting talent and technology across the region, and the **CCRSP Stakeholder Conference**, where we'll shape the future of skills in Wales and drive meaningful conversations and action.

We also highlight efforts to engage young people through FE roadshow events, celebrate employer excellence at the Careers Wales Valued Partner Awards, and highlight the Junior Chef Academy, inspiring future culinary talent. Additionally, we explore Medr's new strategic plan and feature hospitality sector case studies, reflecting its evolving landscape.

Our sincere thanks go to our partners, stakeholders and the wider community for their continued support. Together, we are building a thriving future for the Cardiff Capital Region.

Leigh Hughes,
Chair of the CCRSP Employment and Skills Board



»»» Apprenticeship Week Wales 2025 - celebrating skills and opportunities

Apprenticeship Week Wales 2025 (AW2025) was a vibrant celebration of the impact apprenticeships have on individuals, businesses and the Welsh economy.

Across the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) organisations including NTFW, Careers Wales, local authorities, Colegau Cymru, and the Welsh Government came together to highlight the diverse opportunities apprenticeships offer.

»»» Showcasing apprenticeships at the Senedd

The Apprenticeship Fair at the Senedd, organised by the National Training Federation for Wales (NTFW) and Colegau Cymru, was a standout event of the week and was hosted by the cross-party group on apprenticeships, co-chaired by Luke Fletcher MS and Joyce Watson MS.

The event brought together apprentices, employers, training providers and policymakers to discuss the vital role apprenticeships play in developing a skilled workforce.

Vikki Howells, minister for further and higher education, addressed attendees, reinforcing the Welsh Government's commitment to preparing learners for the jobs of the future.

The event was attended by all 10 work-based learning contract commission holders, as well as representatives from Medr and the Welsh Government, demonstrating the strength of partnerships.

A joint statement from NTFW and Colegau Cymru reaffirmed the importance of apprenticeships in building a resilient and skilled workforce, calling for continued investment to meet Wales's ambitious targets.



»»» Careers Wales: supporting young people into apprenticeships

Throughout AW2025, Careers Wales actively supported young people in exploring apprenticeships. They provided guidance on CV writing, interview support, and vacancy matching services.

With hundreds of apprenticeships available across 23 different sectors, Careers Wales encouraged young people to explore their options and gain valuable work experience.

A great success story was Taylor Hoskins from Skewen, who after completing a work experience placement at Wales & West Utilities, secured an apprenticeship. Taylor now advises young people to follow their interests and gain hands-on experience. **Read Taylor's full story** on the Careers Wales website.

Find out more about support from Careers Wales on their website. (www.careerswales.gov.wales)



Local authorities championing apprenticeships

Local authorities across the CCR actively promoted apprenticeship pathways throughout the week, highlighting success stories, recruitment opportunities, and career progression routes.

- Cardiff council encouraged individuals to explore apprenticeships in engineering, IT, health and social care, and hospitality, sharing an informative video on the benefits of apprenticeships.
You can view it on their Facebook page.
- Rhondda Cynon Taff council spotlighted its social care apprenticeship programme, which has successfully helped individuals—including those with care experience—move into qualified social work roles.

One such success is Naomi, a former looked-after child who qualified as a social worker through the scheme.

Read Naomi's story on the RCT website

- Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council promoted apprenticeships across 23 sectors, helping connect learners with employers to address skills gaps.
- Welsh Government Minister for Children and Social Care, Dawn Bowden, visited social care apprentices to see the impact of apprenticeships first-hand. **Find out more about the Minister's visit.**

A lasting impact

AW2025 reinforced the value of apprenticeships as a pathway to career success and economic resilience.

The week-long celebration not only raised awareness but also fostered meaningful connections between employers, training providers and future apprentices.

With strong collaboration across NTFW, Careers Wales, local authorities, Colegau Cymru and the Welsh Government, the Cardiff Capital Region remains committed to developing a skilled workforce through high-quality apprenticeship opportunities.

Find out more about apprenticeships in Wales:

- **Apprenticeships - individuals**
GOV.WALES
- **Apprenticeships**
Business Wales Skills Gateway
- **Search for an apprenticeship vacancy**
Apprenticeships





Wales Tech Week 2025 - uniting innovation, talent, and opportunity

Mark your calendars for one of the most anticipated events in the global tech calendar.

Wales Tech Week 2025 will take place from **24 to 26 November 2025** at the International Convention Centre Wales (ICC Wales) in Newport.

Powered by Technology Connected, Wales Tech Week is Wales's largest international tech summit, celebrating the nation's thriving tech ecosystem. This unique event brings together the brightest minds from various sectors to showcase cutting-edge technology and explore the future of industries such as healthcare, gaming, space exploration, sustainable energy and more.

Wales Tech Week is the perfect platform to witness the power of technology and people coming together. With its emphasis on innovation, collaboration and industry insights, this dynamic summit offers a unique opportunity for attendees to learn, discover new tech trends and connect with like-minded individuals. It's a celebration of everything tech can achieve in shaping tomorrow's world.

Why attend Wales Tech Week 2025?

Wales Tech Week is more than just an event, it's a celebration of the technology sector's immense potential.

It serves as a platform for leaders and innovators to come together and exchange ideas that could change the way we live, work, and connect.

Participation offers access to cutting-edge tech trends, global investment and valuable networking opportunities, enabling you to stay ahead of the rapidly evolving tech world.

For more information, including **exhibitor and partnership opportunities**, visit **Wales Tech Website** or **contact the team**

Key highlights

- **Talent4Tech** - A one-of-a-kind tech career event designed to attract the next generation of skilled tech professionals. Whether you're an employer looking to recruit or a student eager to dive into the tech world, Talent4Tech offers an immersive, informative, and inspiring experience.
- **Exhibitor opportunities** - For businesses looking to increase their visibility, Wales Tech Week provides a unique chance to showcase their brand to an international audience across the three days. Engage with global leaders, decision-makers, and tech innovators to drive business growth and forge valuable partnerships.
- **Global reach** - With a focus on Wales as a global technology leader, the summit highlights internationally recognised sectors such as **compound semiconductors, cybersecurity, AI, FinTech, MedTech, and blockchain**, all while driving engagement and investment.
- **Immersive experience** - Exhibitors will benefit from both **physical and virtual exhibition opportunities**, ensuring a truly hybrid experience that expands your reach beyond the event.



Wales
Tech
Week

24 - 26 November 2025





CCRSP Stakeholder Conference 2025 - shaping the future of skills in Wales

This year's CCRSP Stakeholder Conference promises to be a key event in the ongoing development of skills strategies in Wales.



Due to be held in mid-May, this large-scale conference will bring together approximately 150 employers, stakeholders and providers to explore the latest skills policy and strategy. It will also celebrate the successes from the current Employment and Skills Plan 2022-25 and gather insights to inform future developments.

As we navigate a period of political transition ahead of the 2026 Senedd elections, this conference will provide a vital platform for dialogue between Welsh Government officials and the broader skills community.

Key themes will include the growing importance of green skills and the ongoing work to refresh the sector-driven activities that support Wales's future workforce. With input from organisations such as Welsh Government, Medr, and the CCR, the conference will feature keynote addresses from industry leaders, as well as running topical workshops that dive into some of the most pressing issues in the skills sector.

The conference will provide an opportunity to foster valuable exchanges between employers and stakeholders when shaping skills development across the region. It will also provide participants with a unique opportunity to engage directly with policymakers, share their insights, and play an active role when influencing positive change.



CCRSP roadshow events -engaging young people across the region

CCRSP is arranging a series of roadshow events in collaboration with further education institutions to engage young people across the region. These events target young people aged 16-24 and align with the Young Person's Guarantee - focusing on fostering youth engagement.

The roadshows will take the form of five satellite seminars, each hosted at one of the region's five colleges. Each event will host around 30 attendees, creating an intimate and focused environment for meaningful engagement.

The events aim to provide an interactive information exchange where young people can learn about the wide range of opportunities available to them across the region - from education and training pathways to employment and career prospects. They will also provide valuable insights that will contribute to the refresh of the CCRSP Employment and Skills Plan, ensuring that the views and aspirations of younger generations are reflected in future policies and strategies.

By engaging directly with young people, the CCRSP seeks to create a platform for them to share their thoughts on the direction of the Plan, particularly regarding their specific needs and concerns. This will help inform the refresh and ensure that the Plan remains relevant and responsive to the changing needs of today's younger populations.

These events serve as a valuable follow-up to the larger CCRSP Stakeholder Conference - providing a broader platform for employers, stakeholders, and providers to discuss key policy developments and skills strategies.





Celebrating employer excellence at the Careers Wales Valued Partner Awards 2025

The Careers Wales Valued Partner Awards 2025 took place in January at The Neuadd in the Senedd. It recognised businesses across Wales that have gone above and beyond to support young people's career aspirations.

Hosted by journalist Sian Lloyd, the event highlighted the vital role employers play in bridging the gap between education and the workplace.

The awards celebrate businesses that engage with schools, provide valuable work-related experiences and inspire the next generation through initiatives such as employer talks, mentoring, and work placements.

The event reinforced the importance of collaboration between employers and education providers in shaping the future workforce.

The CCRSP is committed to supporting businesses in strengthening these links and ensuring that young people are equipped with the skills needed for Wales's evolving economy.

Congratulations to all winners and nominees for their dedication to inspiring future talent!

For more information on the **Valued Partner Awards**, visit **Careers Wales**.

The winners for 2025 included:



Outstanding Achievement Award:
Hywel Dda University Health Board



Best Newcomer:
Morlais



Best Ongoing Relationship with a School:
BBC Studios & BBC Cymru Wales



Outstanding Personal Contribution:
Catrin Leader (Bute Energy) & Gwenno Angharad Williams (Cyngor Gwynedd)



Most Supportive Work Experience Employer:
Westward Energy Services



Best Promoter of Welsh in the Workplace:
Canolfan S4C Yr Egin



Best Supporter of the Net Zero Agenda:
Viridor



Most Supportive Small Business:
Grounds for Good



Junior Chef Academy - inspiring future culinary talent in Wales

Aspiring young chefs in Wales are getting a taste of the culinary industry through the Junior Chef Academy.

The academy is a 10-week skills program designed for young people aged 14 to 16 and delivered in partnership by Compass Cymru, Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC), and Cardiff Commitment. The initiative provides hands-on training to develop essential kitchen skills and spark interest in careers within hospitality.

Held at Cardiff West Community High School, the program offers students a unique opportunity to work with professional chefs and learn vital skills such as food preparation, knife handling and kitchen safety.

The curriculum also emphasises sustainability, nutrition and the importance of using locally sourced ingredients.

The program culminates in a special showcase event at Cardiff City Stadium, where participants test their newly acquired skills by preparing a three-course meal for an audience of family members, industry professionals and local dignitaries.

The initiative aligns closely with the Cardiff Commitment's goal to provide young people with meaningful experiences that connect them to future career pathways.

By introducing students to the world of professional cooking, the Junior Chef Academy not only enhances their skills but also highlights the vast opportunities available within Wales's vibrant hospitality sector.

For more information on this fantastic initiative and how it's shaping the future workforce, visit **Compass Cymru**.



Cardiff and Vale College learners shine in hospitality and culinary excellence

Cardiff and Vale College (CAVC) continue to pave the way for young talent in the hospitality industry with several outstanding learners achieving remarkable success in their respective fields.

From international competitions to rapid career progression, these learners exemplify the impact of high-quality education and training at CAVC.

Ruby Pile

Representing the UK on the world stage

Ruby Pile, a former HND Hospitality Management learner, achieved an incredible milestone by being selected to represent the UK at WorldSkills Lyon 2024.

Competing in the restaurant service category, Ruby joined Team UK at the Skills Olympics in France - an event that showcased world-class talent and served as a benchmark for global workforce readiness.

Ruby said: **"I'm so proud of myself for getting selected to represent the UK in my skill. Hard work and dedication really do pay off!"**

CAVC Principal, Sharon James-Evans, praised Ruby's dedication, highlighting her success across WorldSkills and Skills Competition Wales events: **"Ruby has shone at every level and her reward is representing the UK on the international stage - an opportunity few get to experience."**

Ieuan Jones

Rising star in the culinary world

From competing in the Young Chef Olympiad to working in Michelin-starred restaurants, Ieuan Jones has established himself as a rising talent in the culinary industry. While at CAVC he won Best Dessert at the Young Chef Olympiad, highlighting his skill and creativity on an international platform.

Since completing his Level 2 Hospitality Services and Level 3 Professional Cookery courses, Ieuan's career has flourished. He began working at the one Michelin-starred Lucknam Park before securing a prestigious Chef de Partie role at a two Michelin-star restaurant in London - an incredible achievement at just 21 years old.



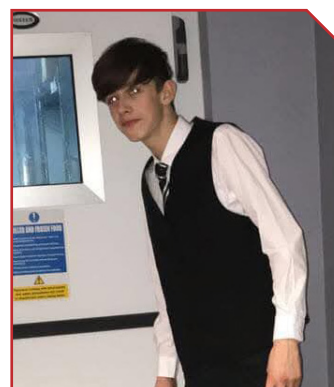
Marnie Gaskell

Climbing the hospitality ladder

Marnie Gaskell's journey through the Level 3 Hospitality Supervision and Leadership course at CAVC has been marked

by rapid progression. While studying, she worked as a Hospitality Supervisor at Loungers in Newport, quickly earning a promotion to Assistant Manager.

Marnie's talent was further recognised in competition, winning gold at Skills Competition Wales and the UK finals, where she represented both Wales and CAVC. Now she is preparing for an exciting new chapter, moving to Australia for six months, where she will gain international experience in the hospitality sector.



Kian Bennett

From junior apprentice to hospitality leader

For Kian Bennett the traditional school route wasn't the right fit, but CAVC's Junior Apprentice Programme provided

the perfect opportunity to discover his passion. Through dedicated coaching and mentoring, Kian completed a City & Guilds Level 2 qualification in Hospitality Services and progressed to Level 3 Hospitality Management.

Now thriving as a supervisor at Motorpoint Arena Cardiff, Kian's success goes beyond his career - he is also supporting his household financially, demonstrating maturity and resilience. His journey highlights the power of alternative education pathways and the importance of finding the right environment to thrive.

Beatrice Beere

A passion for culinary excellence

With a strong work ethic and a drive for success, Beatrice Beere embraced every challenge presented during her time at CAVC. Studying Level 2 Hospitality Services and Level 3 Professional Cookery she competed in Skills Competition Wales and WorldSkills events which helped build her confidence and resilience.

Now employed as a chef in CAVC's restaurant and events department, Beatrice continues to hone her skills in a professional setting, proving that commitment and passion open doors in the culinary world.



Inspiring the next generation

These learners' achievements reflect CAVC's commitment to excellence, providing students with the skills, experiences and opportunities to succeed in highly competitive industries.

Their success stories serve as an inspiration to current and future students, proving that dedication, talent and the right training can lead to incredible opportunities - both locally and globally.

CCRSP update: Medr's strategic plan - key developments

Medr, the body responsible for funding and regulating the tertiary education and research sector in Wales, has made significant progress in developing its five-year strategic plan which is aimed at strengthening the integration of tertiary education and research across Wales.

The plan, which was developed in consultation with partners across Wales, responds to the Welsh Government's **statement of strategic priorities for tertiary education and research and innovation**, while also addressing the requirements outlined in **The Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act**.

The strategic plan sets out Medr's core strategic aims and commitments, detailing the approach to achieve these objectives. It aligns with the five ways of working in the Well-being of Future Generations Act, ensuring that sustainability and long-term thinking guide actions across the education, research and innovation sectors in Wales.

To ensure full ministerial involvement, approval was sought across a range of Welsh Government divisions and Medr will continue to engage with stakeholders throughout the development and delivery process.

Further updates will be shared in upcoming newsletters and further information can be found on their website - www.medr.cymru/en/strategic-plan/

