

Apprenticeships at Public Health Wales

Investing in people, communities and our future workforce

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Why apprenticeships matter

Apprenticeships help us deliver our 10-year People Strategy by:

- Growing talent from within
- Building skills for our future workforce needs
- Creating opportunities for people at all career stages
- Supporting inclusion, fair work and widening access to opportunity
- Building skills that strengthen Public Health Wales



As a public health organisation, we recognise that good work, fair pay and career opportunities are important determinants of health and wellbeing

Our approach

Historically, services were encouraged to convert vacant posts into apprenticeship opportunities where possible.

Whilst successful in some areas, this approach could be challenging because:

- Services still needed the same workforce capacity
- Managers were often unable to reduce establishment to create apprenticeship roles
- Financial pressures limited opportunities



In 2025 we took a new approach:

- 50% centrally funded
- 50% funded by the employing departments

This allowed us to invest in future talent with minimal reduction to operational capacity

Our apprenticeship programme

In 2025, six new apprenticeship opportunities were created

Delivered through our shared funding model in:

- Accountancy
- Business administration
- Digital content
- Digital skills for business
- Project management
- User-centred design

Support provided:

- ✓ 6 months mentor support provided by People & OD for managers and apprentices
- ✓ Peer group formed
- ✓ Networking sessions
- ✓ Training provider support

Fair work in action

As a public health organisation, we recognise that apprenticeships contribute to...

- Paid employment whilst learning
- Income and financial independence
- Skills and lifelong learning
- Confidence and wellbeing
- Skills and experiences that can strengthen future career prospects

Public Health Wales has introduced a structured apprenticeship pay framework aligned to apprenticeship levels:

- Level 2 apprentices start at the Real Living Wage, regardless of age
- Pay increases according to the level of apprenticeship being undertaken
- A clear framework recognises increasing skills, knowledge and responsibility
- Supports recruitment, development and future progression

Our apprenticeship programme reflects our commitment to fair work and social value

Supporting progression beyond the apprenticeship

Through their apprenticeship, individuals gain:

- A recognised qualification
- Meaningful work experience
- Transferable skills and confidence
- Experience of working within Public Health Wales

At the end of the apprenticeship

Our ambition is to retain and develop our apprentices within Public Health Wales, wherever suitable progression opportunities are available.

- Where possible, opportunities to progress to a higher-level apprenticeship
- Guaranteed interview for any Public Health Wales vacancy if they meet the minimum essential criteria
- Completion of an apprenticeship does not automatically guarantee a substantive role

Our aim is to give apprentices the strongest possible platform for their future career

Meet one of our apprentices, Lucy...



“Having recently left school, I chose to move directly into an apprenticeship rather than continuing in full-time education.

This opportunity has allowed me to develop practical workplace skills while gaining valuable knowledge and experience in a professional environment.

Since starting, I have improved my communication skills and built a strong foundation for my future career. I aspire to become a fully qualified accountant by successfully completing my professional exams.

Working in Public Health Wales has reinforced my ambition, as it is rewarding to contribute to an organisation with strong values while continuing to develop my skills and progress.”

“It has given me valuable experiences, skills and knowledge that I don’t believe I would have gained in the same way through college.”

The value of an apprentice - a manager's perspective

“Investing in an apprentice has delivered benefits beyond simply adding resource”

For the team:

- Increased capacity within the team
- Brought fresh thinking and positive energy
- Created opportunities for mentoring and knowledge sharing
- Helped strengthen a culture of learning and development

For the future:

- New skills and knowledge are applied directly in the workplace
- Supports the development of our future workforce
- Provides immediate value while building longer-term capacity

Next steps for the apprenticeship programme

- Evaluate the experience of the first cohort in April 2027
- Gather feedback from apprentices, managers and training providers
- Review qualification progress, support arrangements and impact on teams
- Assess progression opportunities within PHW as apprentices approach completion
- Explore barriers to retention, including vacancy timing and funding for higher-level apprenticeships
- Begin progression planning with apprentices and services
- Use the learning to refine the model and shape future cohorts



Apprenticeships beyond the programme

Our apprenticeship activity extends beyond dedicated apprentice roles.

Colleagues across Public Health Wales are also using apprenticeship qualifications to develop and deepen their skills and knowledge alongside their substantive roles, while gaining formal recognition of that learning through a nationally recognised qualification.

- **55 colleagues currently undertaking apprenticeship qualifications**
- **7 different qualification areas (digital, management, data, HR, admin, project management)**
- **Levels 2 to 5 represented**

Apprenticeships are supporting both entry into Public Health Wales and ongoing career development for our existing workforce

Board takeaway

Public Health Wales is:

- ✓ Investing in future talent and developing our existing workforce
- ✓ Demonstrating fair work principles in practice
- ✓ Creating accessible routes into employment, development and career progression
- ✓ Building skills and capability for a sustainable future workforce
- ✓ Linking good work and employment with our wider population health purpose
- ✓ Delivering the ambitions of our 10-Year People Strategy

At Public Health Wales, apprenticeships are more than a training programme

They are a practical demonstration of our values and our commitment to improving health through good work



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Gweithio gyda'n gilydd
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