



# **National Assembly for Wales, Enterprise and Business Committee**

Inquiry into Helping Young People into Work

BBC Cymru Wales - evidence

October 2014

## I. Overview of BBC Wales

- The BBC is Wales' national broadcaster – providing content across television, radio and interactive media in Welsh and English.
- BBC Wales provides value to audiences in Wales:
  - through national programmes and services which are made in Wales and for Wales specifically (e.g. BBC Wales Today and BBC Radio Cymru), and
  - through the production of network programmes and services which are broadcast in Wales and across the rest of the UK (e.g. Doctor Who, Sherlock, BBC Cardiff Singer of the World and The Call Centre).
- BBC Wales' news services reach more than half the adults in Wales every week. Our English language programming on BBC One Wales and BBC Two Wales attract roughly one million viewers each week. Our news and sport website are also accessed by more than three million different browsers (PC or mobile) each week.
- BBC Wales provides Welsh language programming and content across radio (BBC Radio Cymru), television (via S4C) and online (BBC Cymru Fyw).
- Wales has established a reputation as a centre of excellence for high-end drama production. The BBC's Roath Lock centre is the biggest TV drama production facility in the UK.
- BBC Wales will relocate to a new broadcast centre right outside Cardiff Central station in 2018. We expect the move to kick-start one of the capital's most ambitious regeneration projects in years – and provide a focal point for the nation's creative industries.
- BBC Wales works closely with S4C – and provides almost £20m of programming to the channel each year (including the soap opera Pobol Y Cwm). BBC and S4C jointly commissioned the TV drama Hinterland (which will return for a second series next year). S4C will join BBC iPlayer later this year.
- As a result of the last licence fee settlement, BBC Wales has seen an overall reduction in funding of some 16% since 2011. By reducing overheads, content cuts have been closer to 10% (with news, current affairs and political output protected from cuts)

## 2. Context

BBC Wales welcomes the opportunity to submit evidence to the Enterprise and Business Committee's inquiry on Attracting Young People into the Workplace. BBC Wales' most recent employment data, shows that 4.7% of its workforce is aged between 16 and 25 years old.

We recognise the need to continue to work to recruit young people aged between 16 and 25. And a number of key initiatives are in place to support this aim, many of which are outlined below.

We would also note that due to the nature of the work at BBC Wales, we require that all our staff have the necessary skills to perform their roles to the high standard we require.

Many initiatives aimed at young people are aimed at strengthening the skills required to work for a broadcaster such as BBC Wales. Additionally, we are currently recruiting an individual to champion workforce diversity - and to help spot the brightest and best from all backgrounds and ensure we have a pool of fantastic candidates when the right roles come up.

### 3. What support is most effective and what are the main barriers that face young people trying to enter the labour market?

The BBC, as one of the biggest names for radio, television and online content, is always looking for the next generation of talent to keep it at its best. We want people with fresh ideas, who ultimately want a career in the industry and are committed to offering apprenticeships and trainee schemes to young individuals in Wales throughout the year. We have listed a wide range of initiatives undertaken by the BBC in Wales below.

#### 3.1 Apprenticeships

Currently BBC Wales provides an annual 12-month **Apprenticeship in Creative and Digital Media** – offering approximately 10 placements a year to 16-24 year olds. The Skillset accredited Scheme is run in conjunction with Cyfle, an industry training provider, and targets specific skills gaps within the local industry.

We currently have placements in Art Department, Costume, Post Production, Camera, Sound, Radio Sport, Interactive and Learning and Grip. We advertise the Apprenticeship via conventional methods (BBC Jobs site, local media) as well as on

social media sites. We also organise open days for all to try and target as diverse a set of applicants as possible.

We have a long-term commitment to these apprenticeships and offer trainee/entry level roles that the apprentices are able to apply for (following BBC recruitment guidelines) once they have completed the 12 month apprenticeship. In 2014 we have appointed trainees on BBC contracts in art department, camera, costume and post production.

The apprentice scheme launched in 2012 and is currently in its third year, with 11 apprentices recently starting their 12 month placements. Over the previous 2 years we have taken on 18 apprentices. Of that 18, 16 completed the apprenticeship and attained their level 3 diploma in Creative and Digital Media. From the 18 placements 11 now continue to work in the industry, either at the BBC or in the local market as freelancers/for Independent companies. A further 2 returned to education to attain further qualifications

**BBC Technology Apprenticeships** are recruited centrally and will be put on a placement in Wales in addition to other BBC bases. At the end of the scheme they will receive a Beng (Hons) Broadcast Engineering and have the necessary skillset to be suitable for internal and industry roles.

Two **BBC Radio Apprenticeships** are currently provided each year with Radio Wales and Radio Cymru. The individuals will be suitable for internal and industry roles at the end of the scheme.

### **3.2 Entry-level and trainee opportunities**

Our **Production Talent Pool** identifies approximately 18-25 relatively inexperienced individuals each year ready for selection into entry-level roles (runners or production management assistants). This is heavily publicised on social media and the BBC careers site.

Candidates go through a rigorous application, assessment and interview process. The successful candidates are given initial training in areas such as health and safety, post production paperwork and BBC systems. This training is invaluable as a stepping stone for an entry level role. The successful candidates are based in Wales.

At our **Roath Lock drama studios**, we also offer entry level opportunities to runners, edit assistants and production management assistants on all of our dramas. We have recently created 2 new rolling 6-month contracts for trainees in make-up, hair

and prosthetics on one of our continuing dramas.

In addition, BBC Wales also supports **pan-BBC entry level schemes**, offering work experience placements in a variety of roles. For example, BBC Wales's drama team offers Production Trainee Scheme placements in script and development departments and offers work to individuals who have gained a place in the BBC Talent Pool.

Our **Journalism Bursary scheme** offers work placements to students at Cardiff School of Journalism in both News and Sport. These placements are for 3 months and enable the individuals to gain invaluable experience on a training contract at their end of their post graduate diploma. Alongside this scheme, we provide three-month **Journalism Trainee** placements in our Wales newsroom. These roles are recruited as trainees in online radio and tv production. At the end of scheme the individuals are trained journalists and suitable for roles internally and within the industry.

The **'It's My Shout'** development programme provides practical opportunities in television and film production targeting individuals and groups that would not normally have access to such opportunities. BBC Wales is a partner and sponsor of the scheme (with S4C) - providing mentoring and training both in front of and behind the camera for the participants. Every summer, It's My Shout produces short 10- 30 minutes films in Welsh and English, and a 'making of' documentary - six of these films have been commissioned and will broadcast on BBC Wales in November/December 2014 with three films being broadcast on S4C.

### **3.3 Links with Higher Education and Further Education**

BBC Wales's links with HE/FE provide an important way of connecting with entrants to the media business. There is a wide range of activity at all levels between BBC Wales and the FE/HE sector. Some are as simple as contacts agreed between individuals in response to HE/FE requests for guest industry speakers, progressing through approaches for the accreditation or validation of courses on behalf of the BBC, to involvement in strategic pan-BBC projects with multiple HE/FE institutions and contacts.

These links with HE/FE have the potential to bring fresh thinking to BBC Wales and help answer specific challenges in areas such as diversity and on-screen portrayal. They help the business expand its contact base and can also support the search for new talent which is already based in Wales, an important feature of sustaining a dynamic and agile workforce here.

The engagement with HE/FE is considered beneficial by the institutions and their students, judging from the volume of activity and feedback. They place a high value on the knowledge brought from the workplace and the BBC brand carries weight.

The links can be formal or informal, and include the following:

- Lectures and tutorials, usually specialist and based around a particular course objective (Radio Production, Creative Pitching, Journalism)
- Presentations and Q+A sessions on how to get a job or do a job (sometimes involving other broadcasters/production houses in a panel or speed dating format)
- Placement and support for students, as well as provision of expert time and facilities. Also through course validation work as part of the wider industry group

### **3.4 Attracting a more diverse workforce**

One of the biggest challenges facing the creative sector in Wales has been the slow progress made in attracting people from more diverse backgrounds into the industry. Currently, too many people with disabilities and from BAME and less advantaged backgrounds find it harder to access the industry.

This is an issue across the UK for the creative sector and BBC Wales is determined to make real headway on this issue in the months and years ahead - working alongside a range of partners.

The BBC gets much right on diversity. But scrutiny, perceptions, expectations and our duty to show leadership mean we have to do more. Because of our unique funding we rightly see it as our duty to drive change and lead the industry. We want diversity to run right through our business, from top to bottom.

The BBC recently announced ambitious new plans to address the off-screen representation of BAME people at the BBC across the UK and to ensure that the BBC of the future should represent every family and community in the UK. The plans include:

- a new top level leadership development programme, led by the Executive Board;
- more training internships alongside our existing apprenticeships;
- creation of a new diversity advisory group, chaired by the DG, to offer independent challenge and advice; and
- stretching targets to make sure we deliver on our new commitments.

In addition, current activity in Wales includes:

### **Extend**

Extend is a BBC-wide placement scheme which offers appropriately experienced and/or qualified disabled people a great opportunity to gain six months paid work within the BBC.

We have many challenging and imaginative placements across the country, in both programming and support areas. Over the last 17 years, Extend has recruited 604 disabled people. Although there is no guarantee of a full-time job at the end of the 6 month placement, last year over 75% of the 'Extendees' gained further work at the BBC. Over the past five years, 13 disabled people between 16 and 25 years have been offered work placements as part of the Extend programme in Wales.

### **Workforce Diversity Lead**

BBC Wales is currently recruiting a new Diversity Lead to drive our recruitment from more diverse communities. This role will seek out individuals with the potential to make a real mark at the BBC, focusing on individuals from BAME groups, people with disabilities, and people from less prosperous backgrounds.

### **Project FIO and BBC Wales**

The Arts Council of Wales-funded Project FIO offers children and young people the opportunity to learn new skills in television, theatre and the arts. BBC Wales took part in a three week summer school in August 2014.

- Approximately 15 young people, aged between 15 – 19 years old attended the group sessions over the summer. This included a significant number of young people from BAME and disadvantaged backgrounds. The sessions included a tour of Roath Lock drama village, talks from a variety of BBC Wales' teams and face to face chats with individuals at BBC Wales.
- Through its outreach work, the project gave the young people the opportunity to gain insight into organisations they may think are not for them. By working with Project FIO BBC Wales was able to interact with a group of young people who, we hope, will now consider applying for opportunities at BBC Wales in the future.
- The sessions also gave BBC Wales the opportunity to engage with the young people; giving them an insight into BBC Wales and giving BBC staff an opportunity to gain a better understanding of our audience. The sessions were also a chance for the young people to gain some practical experience of television production.