

National Assembly for Wales
Enterprise and Business Committee
Discussion on the Welsh Government's Co-investment in Skills
Framework

Evidence from an individual – CIS 08

Dear Sir/Madam,

There appears to be a clear disparity between the willingness of the Welsh Government to invest and the proposal for employers to do so.

While the Welsh Government proposes:

“Subject to the availability of government resources the focus of investments will be to support:

- *Apprenticeship provision at level 3 and below for under 25s*
- *Higher level apprenticeships (excluding higher education prioritised qualifications)*
- *Up to Level 2 in essential skills of numeracy, literacy and ICT*
- *Welsh for Adults*
- *Preparation for life and work (includes provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities”*

It appears:

"employers will be expected to support:

- *Apprenticeships up to level 3 for those aged 25 and over (excluding essential skills up to level 2 and support for higher apprenticeships)*
- *Accredited and non-accredited training for employees 19 and over”*

The proposal is perverse; it seems the over-riding principles of equal opportunities for all with no discrimination are being regarded with contempt by excluding over-25s from apprenticeship provision. In the rush to ensure every child and young person has every opportunity to develop and succeed in life, opportunity for anyone who does not fit into that category is being discriminated against. While the Welsh Government commitment is *“Subject to the availability of government resources”*, there is no such proviso for employers who *“will be expected to support”*.

The core of social care work in Wales is provided by mothers returning to work, adult children who have been caring for an ageing parent and who wish to transfer those anecdotal caring skills to social care and adults who have matured sufficiently to be able to face up to the challenges of providing care to someone they do not know, but who has desperate need for health and social care services. The need for government to deliver services with a decreasing amount of funds is recognised and acknowledged, but the apparent disregard of the Welsh Government for the need to assist the upscaling of the social care workforce as a whole sits in great contrast to proposals to provide increasing amounts of funding to the younger members of society, not to mention proposals to increase the salaries of AMs by £10,000 and increase their number.

Skills are important, but the facility to achieve them must be available to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, religious belief, sexual orientation or age. While so many sacrifices are being made by service providers through Wales, statutory sector, private and third sectors alike and so much good work is being done by the Welsh Government, I fear in this case the Welsh Government is guilty of pursuing an ill-conceived and divisive policy and I urge the Welsh Government to revisit the process and achieve more equitable approach to upscaling our citizens.

Yours faithfully,