

CHAPTER 5

Further Education & Work-Based Learning



Further Education & Work-Based Learning

Background

The Further Education (FE) and Work Based (WB) Learning schemes were funded by the Welsh Government's Education Department to increase the scope of the National ASD Development Team's Learning with Autism (LwA) resources, and also to tie in with the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018, which states that people working within education need to increase their knowledge and experience around additional learning needs (which includes autism).

Unlike the other LwA schemes, in the FE and WB Learning schemes, the certification will rest with the providers.

The National ASD Development Team will implement the scheme by using a Train the Trainer model, and then it is for the colleges and the work based learning providers to work out how they will roll out the scheme themselves

Both schemes focus on 3 aspects:

1. Before the autistic learner goes to college/ work placement
2. Whilst they are in college/ on a work placement
3. What happens after leaving college/ work placement/ where to go afterwards

Further Education & Work-Based Learning

Description

Further Education

- The resources for the FE scheme have been co-produced with: ColegauCymru, FE colleges, autistic learners, and parents/carers across Wales.
- A generic “What is Autism?” film is shown at the beginning of the training.
- Following this, there is an FE-specific film which is shown. This mirrors the advice sheets provided, which follow the journey for the college staff and the learner and their parent/carer.
- Advice sheets are provided for staff and for the autistic learners themselves. These offer practical suggestions on how to adapt the working environment, equip students with the tools they need to effectively engage and achieve in FE. These are presented in a folder so that any updated future information can be added with ease. There is a file available for staff, and another separate file for the autistic learner.
- The resources follow the journey for a learner/student on how, where, and what they choose to study; what is put in place for them to be there; their time at college/ on placement; where and how they’re helped to move onto the next step of training or employment.
- The aim is to rollout the FE scheme within the next academic year – starting in September 2019 in partnership with the colleges/ WBL providers and ASD Leads across Wales, as well engaging with the IAS Development Workers

Further Education & Work-Based Learning

Work-Based Learning

- This scheme is for employers/trainers and autistic learners/apprentices who engage within a professional, workplace environment.
- The National ASD Development Team worked with the National Training Federation for Wales, Keith Ingram (Cardiff & Vale ASD Lead), and ACT (Associated Community Training Limited) to produce this resource.
- Similar to the FE Scheme, there are resources available for the training provider who works directly with the autistic young person, and resources for the autistic young person themselves.



- The film again follows the journey of the trainee/apprentice through the work based learning process: from how to pick the most appropriate placement/apprenticeship; through to how to manage the workload/how assessments will work, and so on.

Further Education & Work-Based Learning

- There are also “Advice Sheets” in this scheme which are provided in folders to the employers/trainers/staff and a separate folder for the autistic individual/apprentice to support them in their placement/ studies.
- The aim is to launch the Work Based Learning scheme simultaneously with the FE scheme in September 2019.

Outcome

A high level rollout and embedding of the Further Education and Work Based Learning schemes will take place in 2019/20, with the view that the way in which the Team facilitate the implementation of the schemes is just as important as creating the resources.

There are case studies to both schemes which can be found in the films themselves. These will be available to view on the ASDinfoWales site in 2019/20. Below are some of the case studies from the films, with thanks to ACT for the case study examples:

Little Tigers Day Care

We are very proud as a nursery to announce that our apprentice Ellie Curtis aged 18 years was announced as ‘Apprentice of the Year’ 2017 by Monmouthshire business awards at a lavish awards ceremony at the Celtic Manor on Friday 6th October.



Further Education & Work-Based Learning

Ellie was chosen out of over 200 candidates over the whole of Monmouthshire.

Ellie joined us in September 2015 as a young 17 year old apprentice who was about to step into the scary (but enjoyable) world of working with young children.

Ellie fresh out of college came with her own personal issues that she was clearly striving to work against and manage, for Ellie has Autism, Dyslexia and Irlen Syndrome.

Does she let his stop her... NO she doesn't. As her manager I have never met such a determined and focused young lady who is set to prove everyone wrong (especially her previous schools), that she CAN achieve and gain a career that she has always wanted.

Ellie did her training via ACT in Cardiff as well as working closely with her supportive colleagues.

Ellie has completed numerous courses such as Speech and Language, Foundation phase training, First Aid, Food Hygiene, Additional needs training and working alongside children with ASD.

Due to her own personal knowledge and that gained on training it became clear who our Additional needs co-ordinator should be... Ellie.

She took over as our designated ALNco in September 2016 and she has been able to work wonderfully alongside children and their families to ensure focused care and education is received as well as specific support.

Further Education & Work-Based Learning

She attends all meetings with other professionals and directs the way forward for children who need that little bit more support.

We are all exceptionally proud of Ellie and all she is achieving. She has always said that she “wants to help and support children like her” – well she is certainly putting that into practice.

Since Ellie won the award in 2017 she has completed her Level 3 playwork qualification and has now enrolled onto level 5 management.

Darren James Success Story

A self-confessed 'petrol head', eighteen year old Darren James from Pontyclun is well on his way to achieving his dreams of becoming a heavy vehicle diesel fitter.

After completing a Traineeship programme with Wales' leading training provider, ACT, Darren is now thriving as an Apprentice with one of Wales' Premier tour operators, Edward Coaches.



Darren loves working with vehicles, but having been home-schooled throughout childhood he was unsure of what opportunities were available to him.

Further Education & Work-Based Learning

“I was home schooled with my brother, until I was 15 and a family friend suggested ACT as a way for us to get into college. We looked in to it for my brother first and then when we saw he was doing well, I followed him a year later.”

After researching the many different routes available, Darren joined ACT's Traineeship programme, a Pre-Apprenticeship training programme that prepares 16-18 year olds for the world of work. With a keen interest in motor vehicles, he chose to enrol onto a Level 1 Traineeship in Vehicle Maintenance Repair, working hard to overcome the many barriers to learning he faced.

Darren's commitment and drive did not go unnoticed by his tutors, and in 2017 he was nominated for the 'Traineeship of the Year' award at ACT's internal awards in the Motor Vehicle category.

Commenting on the accolade, Darren said:

“I was shocked and very surprised to win the award as I was not expecting to be put forward for it but I am so grateful to the tutors for nominating me.”

Ros Smith, Care, Support and Guidance Co-ordinator at ACT, who nominated Darren for the award and played a key role in his learner journey said:

“Since joining ACT, Darren's really come out of his shell and he's worked hard to build his employability skills. What an achievement for a learner who lacked confidence.”

Further Education & Work-Based Learning

Darren had initially struggled to adapt to the new work and social situations he found himself in, but was determined to persevere and overcome any obstacles he faced.

His tutors were incredibly supportive and encouraged Darren to take part in a pilot scheme, which enabled him to gain access to an educational psychologist for an assessment.

The outcome resulted in Darren being officially stated as having Special educational needs and gaining additional support from his Motor Vehicle tutors via an ALS worker (Additional Learner Support) who provided excellent one-to-one support for Darren during his qualification.

Ros was successfully able to progress Darren onto a Level 2 Heavy Goods course with Cardiff and the Vale College, which later led to an Apprenticeship with Edwards Coaches. All this within a 3 year period.

Darren Gould, ACT Motor Vehicle Sector Lead and Darren's tutor commented:

"I'm very proud of Darren for overcoming his barriers and realising his dreams. He deserves all of the success for all his hard work and efforts."

Darren himself added:

"I couldn't believe it at first when Edwards offered me the Apprenticeship. I was so excited. I now go to college one day a week and work with a brilliant group of men who 'take the mick' a lot but who also take time to teach me the job."

Further Education & Work-Based Learning

Jason Campfield, Fleet Engineer at Edward Coaches commented:

“Darren’s been with us since September and he’s settling in really well. He gets his head down and cracks on with the tasks at hand, which is brilliant. Of course it’s the early stages of his Apprenticeship but he’s learning a lot and there are plenty of opportunities for him to continue to progress and develop his skills and knowledge further so he can take on even more responsibility. We support our Apprentices every step of the way and we’re currently also putting Darren through a driving course so he’ll hopefully have his licence soon too. We also keep in regular contact with the college, so we’re always aware of how he’s doing on his course.”

Apprenticeship schemes have been an excellent resource for Edwards Coaches, who use their Apprentices to grow and nurture a skilled workforce to suit their business needs. They currently have around 10 Apprentices working across their business.

Jason added:

“As a company we massively benefit from Apprenticeship schemes as it means we get to mould our learners to our specific needs. There are plenty of car mechanics out there but working with buses is very different so it’s not always easy to find mechanics who have the experience and skillset we need. We would definitely recommend Apprenticeship schemes to other businesses as they allow you to train your workforce to fit your specific requirements.”

Further Education & Work-Based Learning

Darren is one of thousands of Apprentices who is benefiting from the chance to specialise and develop his skillset, and he is looking forward to taking advantage of the many opportunities that lie ahead for him. Reflecting on his journey to date, he said:

“If I hadn’t gone to ACT and began my Traineeship, I wouldn’t have had the chance to learn about motor vehicles till later on in college - if I had even made it there to begin with. ACT has given me a huge amount of support and I would highly recommend them to absolutely anyone.”

Talking about his future plans, Darren added:

“I’m looking forward to completing the Apprenticeship, including the additional improver year I’m currently doing, and working towards my goal of being a fully qualified heavy vehicle diesel fitter. I’m really excited for what the future holds.”