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# Formative Evaluation of Jobs Growth

## Wales+:

### Interim Report

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

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## Evaluation of Jobs Growth Wales+:

### Interim Report

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# wavehill

Social and economic research

Ymchwil cymdeithasol ac economaidd

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Views expressed in this report are those of the researcher and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government.

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## Glossary

<b>Acronym/Initialism/Keyword</b>	<b>Definition</b>
APS	Annual Population Survey
ARR	Assessment and Referral Report
ARWAP	Anti-racist Wales Action Plan
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CQFW	Credit and Qualifications Framework
CWFW	Curriculum for Wales Framework
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
EPC	Engagement and Progression Coordinator
GCH	Guided Contact Hours
JGW+	Jobs Growth Wales+
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
LDD	Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities
LLWR	Lifelong Learning Wales Record
LU	Learning Unit
MI	Management Information
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
RAG	Research Advisory Group
SFR	Statistical First Release
SPF	Shared Prosperity Fund
TPAP	Tackling Poverty Action Plan
WEMWBS	Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale
YEPF	Youth Engagement and Progression Framework
YPG	Young Person's Guarantee

## 1. Introduction

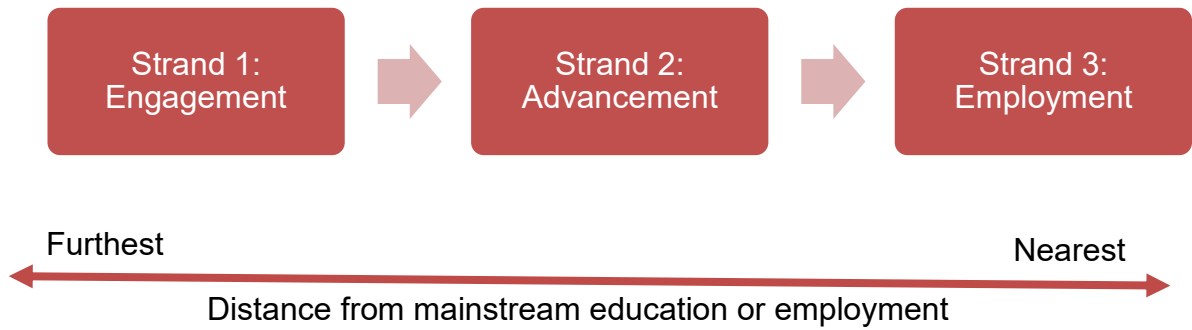
- 1.0 The Jobs Growth Wales+ (JGW+) programme seeks to deliver individualised training, development and employability support to 16–18-year-olds<sup>1</sup> who are assessed as NEET (not in education, employment or training) at the time of starting the JGW+ programme.
- 1.1 Launched in April 2022, the JGW+ programme is due to run until 2026. The programme has been designed to take forward the best elements of two previous employability programmes:
- [Traineeships](#), which supported young people aged 16–18 who were NEET to gain skills, qualifications and experience to enable them to progress to learning at a higher level or to employment, including an apprenticeship.
  - [Jobs Growth Wales 2](#) (JGW 2), which supported unemployed young people aged 16–24 by providing them with work experience for a six-month period. The work experience placement had to be paid at or above the National Minimum Wage (NMW) between 25 and 40 hours per week (with the Welsh Government paying up to 50 per cent of the salary for the duration of that placement).
- 1.2 The JGW+ programme has an agreed term of operation of four years, with an option for an additional two years of delivery until 31 March 2028. The programme is expected to be covered by an overall budget of between £100 million and £200 million, equivalent to funding per year of c.£25 million.
- 1.3 Programme commissions are awarded on an annual basis to Prime Contractors who have been appointed to cover the four regions (or Lots) of Wales.
- 1.4 When originally launched in April 2022, JGW+ operated with a referral system via Working Wales (delivered by Careers Wales), who operate to provide a single all-Wales entry point to employability support. Subsequently, referrals to the programme could also come from Contractors, EPCs as well as through Working Wales.

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<sup>1</sup> The age group for eligibility to JGW+ was extended to 19 in January 2023.

- 1.5 Advice and guidance are provided on a face-to-face basis at Careers Wales offices, local Jobcentres, offices of Contractors, or community outreach locations as well as via the telephone and online.
- 1.6 Advisors help by identifying barriers preventing an individual from accessing employment, education or training. Based on individuals' circumstances and aspirations, trained career advisors identify the most suitable provision available to support the individual in progressing.
- 1.7 If referred to JGW+, the nature and scale of barriers identified inform to which strand (engagement, advancement or employment) of the JGW+ programme the young person is referred (Figure 1.1).
- 1.8 The three strands of JGW+ reflect differentiated levels of interventions available to meet the diverse needs of individuals associated with their distance from mainstream education or employment as assessed upon referral.

**Figure 1.1: JGW+ three-strand model**





## Evaluation

- 1.9 In July 2022 the Welsh Government commissioned Wavehill to undertake a formative evaluation of JGW+, specifically to:
- Track and record the uptake of the programme between April 2022 and April 2024 (including by protected characteristics — to be reported yearly).
  - Undertake an annual outcome assessment of the programme, comparing outcomes by protected characteristics groups and Welsh language.
  - Undertake a process evaluation of the programme.
  - To establish a framework for the impact evaluation of the programme<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.10 The evaluation is being delivered over three phases. The initial scoping phase which ran from August to December 2022 culminated in the production of an internal scoping report. The interim phase (this phase) draws on key aspects of the scoping report whilst also aiming to provide the Welsh Government with timely, robust information on the process and uptake of the JGW+ programme in years 1 (2022/23) and 2 (2023/24) to support ongoing refinement of the programme as delivery progresses. A final phase of the evaluation is due to commence in spring 2024, providing the opportunity to analyse the progress and success of JGW+ over a longer timeframe, undertake a more thorough analysis of the outcomes achieved, and engage those participants who failed to secure a positive outcome.
- 1.11 The remainder of the report is structured as follows:
- **Chapter 2** sets out the methodological approach to the evaluation and reflects on the limitations associated with the approach.
  - **Chapter 3** summarises the policy and socioeconomic context for JGW+ and the previous iterations of the programme.
  - **Chapter 4** provides an overview of the design of JGW+, reflects on its implementation, and details adjustments made to the delivery model in January 2023.

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<sup>2</sup> The impact assessment of JGW+ will be undertaken as part of a later, separate contract.

- **Chapter 5** reviews the progress and performance of the JGW+ programme over time.
- **Chapter 6** provides an analysis of reflections on the delivery model from JGW+ participants, from stakeholders and from employers.
- **Chapter 7** analyses the reported outcomes and impacts arising from the support amongst participants.
- **Chapter 8** summarises the findings of this phase of the evaluation and provides a series of recommendations.

## **2. Methodological Approach**

2.1 This chapter sets out the methods and research activities undertaken to date. Furthermore, it reflects on the limitations associated with the approach.

### **Analysis of project documentation**

2.2 The evaluation has involved a review of various key documentation, including the programme's business case, integrated impact assessment, benefit profiles, several versions of the [programme specification](#), [findings](#) from a series of monitoring visits undertaken by Estyn, and original Theory of Change workshop notes.

### **Scoping interviews**

2.3 Undertaken between August and October 2022, the purpose of the scoping interviews was to engage with a range of stakeholders to explore the rationale behind JGW+, specific elements of its design, and early delivery lessons. Moreover, they provided an opportunity to discuss the priorities of the research. The scoping interviews also contributed to the refinement of the Theory of Change<sup>3</sup> and the evaluation framework.

2.4 Twenty-six scoping interviews were undertaken<sup>4</sup> with 37 key members of the JGW+ team across Careers Wales (n=2) and the Welsh Government (n=11) (including those involved in the design and contract management of the service), each of the Prime Contractors (n=5), representatives of Regional Skills Partnerships (n=2), and a sample of Engagement and Progression Coordinators (EPC) in six local authorities across Wales<sup>5</sup>.

### **Stakeholder interviews**

2.5 For the interim phase of the evaluation, interviews were undertaken with three stakeholder groups:

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<sup>3</sup> Found in the Annexe of the report.

<sup>4</sup> Interviews include a mix of one-to-one and group interviews.

<sup>5</sup> These included Anglesey, Ceredigion, Gwynedd, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, and Swansea. All EPCs will be interviewed in later stages of the evaluation.

- Welsh Government staff (n=14) involved in the design, management, and contractual monitoring of the programme as well as those associated with employability policy.
- Representatives of Contractors and Sub-Contractors (n=27) involved in the management and delivery of the programme.
- Local authority representatives — typically those operating within the Engagement and Progression Coordinator role (who typically provide operational leadership of the [Youth Engagement and Progression Framework](#)<sup>6</sup> at a local authority level). In total, 23 representatives of local authorities were interviewed from 17 (of the 22) local authority areas in Wales, with invites extended to all local authorities to take part.

2.6 Interviews were undertaken virtually and explored the processes associated with the delivery model and the various support offered through each strand. The interviews reflected on the programme management and governance structures as well as the journeys of young people through the programme, including consideration of the types of outcomes that young people are achieving. Discussion guides for all interviews can be found in Annexes B-I.

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<sup>6</sup> The Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF) is a systematic mechanism to identify and respond to young people who are at risk of becoming NEET, who are NEET and/or who are at risk of being homeless. The EPC coordinates a local partnership that assists them in considering the overall picture of provision and how they can successfully collaborate to meet the needs of young people in their local authority area.

## Participant fieldwork

- 2.7 Telephone interviews were undertaken with three groups of participants:
- Participants in the midst of receiving support through JGW+ (subsequently referred to as **‘active participants’**).
  - Participants who had completed JGW+ and secured a positive destination (subsequently referred to as **‘completers’**)<sup>7</sup>.
  - Participants who had left the programme ‘early’ (in less than 12 weeks), prior to securing a positive destination (subsequently referred to as **‘early leavers’**).
- 2.8 In the original methodological design for the evaluation it was proposed that 150 participants would be engaged throughout the entire evaluation (the interim and final phase fieldwork combined). Through the scoping exercise for the fieldwork it was determined that doubling the sample size would be useful in generating a larger and, therefore, more robust body of evidence with which to analyse response by participant status and by Prime Contractor<sup>8</sup>. The sample frame for those active participants and completer participants was designed to be reflective of the proportion of active participants and completers in the programme at the time of the fieldwork. Participant interviews were stratified in the following manner:
- Active participants (60 per cent) and completers (40 per cent) based on the proportional breakdown of active participants and completers at the point of planning the fieldwork (April 2023)<sup>9</sup>.
  - Stratified by Prime Contractor — with participants of all Contractors engaged proportionate to current profiles.
  - Applying a quota to each stratification to ensure that there are at least five respondents from each of the active participant and completer groups for each Prime Contractor.

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<sup>7</sup> Due to a lack of full insight into the data captured on participants, final evaluation work will conduct interviews with participants who have completed JGW+ but have not secured a positive destination.

<sup>8</sup> These were main Contractors in each of the five regions who oversaw or lead delivery through a range of sub-contracted partners but were responsible for reporting on JGW+ delivery to the Welsh Government.

<sup>9</sup> The final proportion achieved was that of 57 per cent active participants (target 60 per cent) and 43 per cent completers (target 40 per cent).

- 2.9 Given the anticipated challenges of engaging with early leavers from the programme, it was proposed that 25 interviews of early leavers would be undertaken, ideally distributed equally across the five Prime Contractors.
- 2.10 Ultimately, participant engagement via telephone proved to be successful, with 218 current or former programme participants interviewed. The over-recruitment of ‘early leavers’ in the sample is associated with limitations regarding the sampling and engagement approach, which are explored later in this section under methodological limitations.

**Table 2.1: Participant fieldwork sample and response rate**

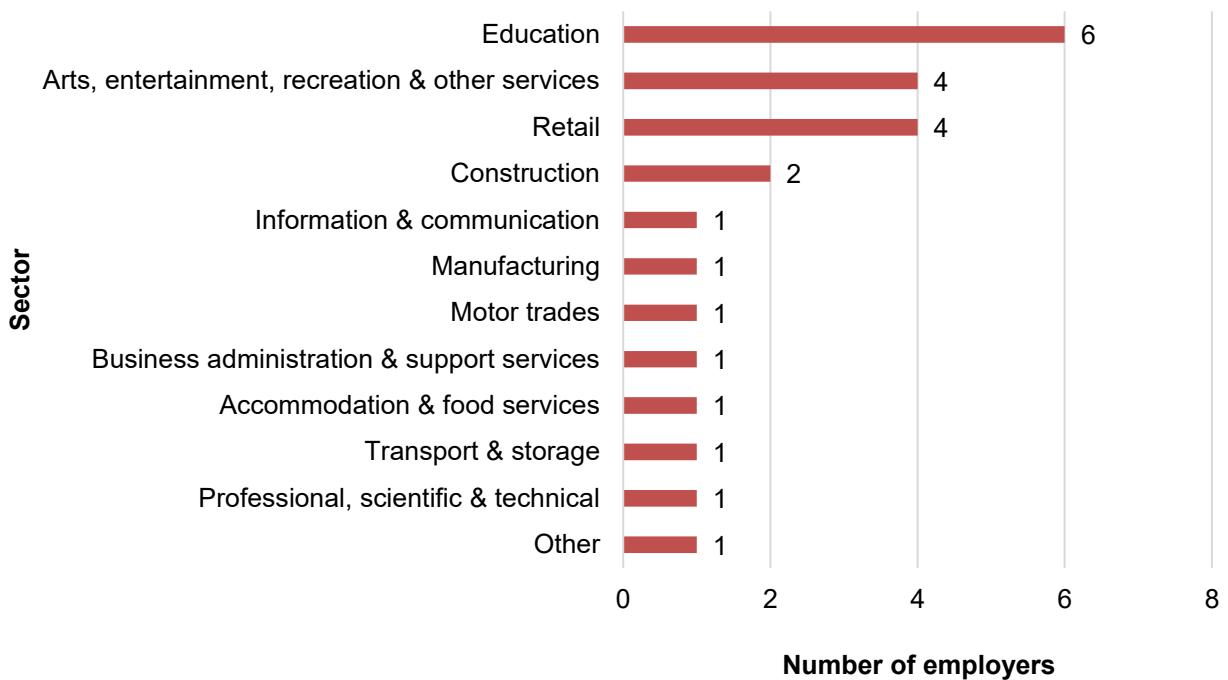
<b>Participant status</b>	<b>Sample<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>Approached</b>	<b>Opted out</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
Active participants	586	563	16	93	17%
Completers	751	430	1	69	16%
Early leavers	1,882	305	5	56	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,219</b>	<b>1,298</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>17%</b>

<sup>10</sup> Please note that a small number of participants self-declared that they were listed incorrectly, e.g. were listed as active but had actually completed the programme, and therefore were subsequently relocated to the correct sample list. Therefore, some participants may appear in more than one sample.

## Employer fieldwork

2.11 Interviews were sought with a sample of employers engaged with participants of JGW+ to capture their perspectives on the programme. Contractors were asked to identify a long list of employers who had consented to being contacted for the purposes of evaluation. The 102 employers selected provide work placements to JGW+ participants and/or have recruited participants from the JGW+ programme into subsidised roles. Wavehill contacted 80 of these employers to achieve interviews. In total, 24 employer interviews (30 per cent) were completed. Fifty-eight per cent of employers operate in the Education, Arts, Entertainment & Recreation, and Retail sectors.

**Figure 2.1: Number of interviewed employers in each sector**



Source: Wavehill interviews with employers (n=24)

## **Management Information**

- 2.12 Anonymised management information (MI) on participants of the programme was supplied by each of the Contractors to Wavehill from November–December 2023. The data provided were for all participants who had enrolled in the programme since it launched in April 2022. The analysis of MI has supplemented published performance data, offering additional granularity in relation to geographical patterns of engagement and performance and progress over time. In December 2023 the Welsh Government provided programme-wide performance data for the April 2022–March 2023 financial year. A combination of this dataset has been analysed and presented within section 5 of this report. The nature of data captured through management information has also informed the design of the draft impact framework for JGW+<sup>11</sup>.

## **Research Advisory Group**

- 2.13 Promo Cymru are contracted partners of the Wavehill evaluation team<sup>12</sup> with specific responsibility for the recruitment, management and support of a Research Advisory Group (RAG) of young people reflective of the target cohort. Promo engaged with individuals with protected characteristics to ensure that they were a focus of the research, and recruited six young people (from 17 applications) to advise the evaluation team. It was advertised bilingually via the Promo Cymru website, Instagram, and Twitter feeds. The advertisement provided details of the role and expectation and confirmed that participants would be paid the National Living Wage or the equivalent amount in a voucher of their choice for their participation.
- 2.14 Potential members were asked to submit an expression of interest form and were then contacted by Promo Cymru staff to assess their suitability, interest and wishes with regard to participation.

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<sup>11</sup> The impact framework is expected to be published at a similar time to that of the final report.

<sup>12</sup> Promo Cymru were approached by Wavehill to be part of the evaluation team as part of developing the response to the invitation to tender issued by the Welsh Government in March 2022.



- 2.15 Four workshop sessions were planned for the RAG, to be led by Promo between March and December 2023. Ultimately, seven workshop sessions were delivered, with the increased frequency being a reflection on the need to cement the engagement of participants and to foster a sense of continuity and commitment to the evaluation. The workshops covered the following issues:
- Comments on the relevance and appropriateness of Welsh Government marketing of the JGW+ programme, including website and video content.
  - A review of the participant interview schedules to advise on revised wording and focus of questions, leading to refined surveys used in fieldwork.
  - Commentary on young people's experience of the labour market and the job opportunities available.
  - A review and commentary on the emerging findings of the participant interviews to support analysis and interpretation of findings for inclusion in this interim report.
- 2.16 Promo Cymru sent reports on workshops that highlighted the key insight from the sessions, and provided a full report in December 2023 on the outcomes of the RAG. These led to some changes made to research tools used for the evaluation following comments on question wording or the relevance of response options to young people likely to be engaged with the programme. Insights gained on the marketing of the programme were directed to Welsh Government staff, highlighting positive feedback on content as well as suggestions regarding the use of alternative video options for the distribution of future marketing.

### **Methodological limitations**

- 2.17 The target number of participants engaged as part of the evaluation was successfully surpassed; however, engagement with a representative profile of JGW+ participants in terms of needs/barriers has proved to be challenging for the evaluation. Concerns were raised by some Contractors regarding the most appropriate means of engaging with participants, given the barriers (anxiety and mental health concerns, for example) experienced by a proportion of the participants. In response, a flexible approach to participant engagement (telephone, face to face, and focus group) was proposed. Whilst a range of engagement

approaches were requested (by Contractors) and the means by which to fulfil those requests was provided (by the evaluators), (ultimately) all participants were engaged via telephone because this was their preferred method of contact.

- 2.18 Contractors were requested to provide full contact details for young people who had agreed to take part in the evaluation as part of their enrolment with JGW+ from April 2022. Contact details for participants were requested for three groups: active participants, completers, and early leavers.
- 2.19 Concerns surrounding the engagement of some participants in the evaluation led to a reluctance amongst some Contractors to provide all participant data for random sampling for fieldwork. These included some safeguarding concerns regarding involving specific vulnerable young people. Consequently, Contractors provided a dataset reflecting these three groups of participants involved since the programme started in April 2022 who had consented to being part of the evaluation work. Some Contractors provided all eligible participants, whilst other Contractors offered a sample. Participants were selected at random from the 'long list' of supplied contacts. In the latter scenario there is a risk of selection bias.
- 2.20 There was some inconsistency in the contact data provided for survey participants, such that upon making contact through the survey the individuals' perceived status (e.g. an individual considered that they had left the programme) did not always reflect their allocation by the Contractor (still recorded as an active participant because no evidence of a change of status had been received by the Contractors). Without full access, at the time to Contractor management information data, it was not possible to verify a participant's status against that dataset.
- 2.21 The accuracy of the designation of participants was also undermined by the time that lapsed between the receipt of participant data and the commencement of fieldwork (during which time some participants recorded as 'active' may have transitioned to being 'completers' or 'early leavers'). This is because of the nature of the intervention(s) provided by JGW+, which were scheduled to proceed over several weeks and months. The first contact details from Contractors were received in April 2023; however, initial contact details were still being provided in August

2023. This led to postponement in fieldwork, which ultimately commenced in August 2023.

- 2.22 Consequently, the survey was designed in such a manner as to enable the determination of participant status against the three categories as part of the survey introduction. Participant categorisation was therefore self-reported and there is a challenge in being able to assess the accuracy of the self-designations because of time lags.
- 2.23 The management information for the programme was unavailable to the evaluators until November 2023. Delays in obtaining those data primarily related to the complexities of how they are held in the LLWR database (and would have necessitated multiple reports being built by the Welsh Government to obtain the necessary information). Anonymised management information was instead secured from each of the Contractors. On receipt of those data it became apparent that a considerable proportion of 'early leavers' (those who had participated in JGW+ for less than 12 weeks) had secured positive outcomes (e.g. 58 per cent of participants who enrolled in the engagement strand and recorded a positive outcome were enrolled in the programme for two months or less).
- 2.24 The original programme specification highlighted that support programmes of 12 weeks were expected. Although not prescribed, the evaluation team had expected that support to this timescale or in excess would be needed for participants to progress (particularly as consultations had highlighted more needs than expected under the target). It was therefore assumed that those who had engaged with the programme for less than 12 weeks had left early. Given the prevalence of positive outcomes for this cohort, they were ultimately a poor representation of individuals who may have had an adverse experience of the programme (one intention of selecting an 'early leaver' target group).

2.25 For future fieldwork, access to individualised management information (MI) will enable sample frames to be established which specifically target three groups of ‘leavers’: those who left with a positive outcome, those with a neutral outcome, and those with a negative outcome<sup>13</sup>. The evidence gathered could then be linked back to management information to supplement the information gathered through fieldwork.

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<sup>13</sup> Definitions of these outcomes can be found in section 5 of this report.

### **3. Policy Context**

#### **Introduction**

- 3.1 This chapter summarises the policy and socioeconomic context for the JGW+ and the previous iterations of the programme.

#### **Policy context**

#### **Tackling Poverty Action Plan (TPAP) and Youth Engagement and Progression Framework (YEPF)**

- 3.2 In the lead-up to the first Jobs Growth Wales programme, the Welsh Government's Tackling Poverty Action Plan (TPAP, 2012–16) identified three key objectives: preventing poverty, helping people to improve their skills and qualifications, and mitigating the impact of poverty. A key part of that plan was a commitment to reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- 3.3 Shortly after the launch of the TPAP the Welsh Government published the implementation plan for the [Youth Engagement and Progression Framework](#) (YEPF). The framework set out a new approach to supporting young people who are or are at risk of becoming NEET, and sought to respond to widespread concerns that services for this target group suffered from failing to join up or to place the needs of young people first. The framework had six key elements:
- identifying young people most at risk of disengagement
  - better brokerage and coordination of support
  - stronger tracking and transitions of young people through the system
  - ensuring that provision meets the needs of young people
  - strengthening employability skills and opportunities for employment
  - greater accountability for better outcomes for young people.

- 3.4 The TPAP and the YEPP were key foundational elements that underpinned the delivery of the Traineeships programmes and two previous iterations of Jobs Growth Wales (from which JGW+ has drawn extensively). The design of the original JGW programme was also influenced by the backdrop of the 2008–2009 UK recession, where evidence identified disproportionate exposure to the recession (and the associated impacts) amongst young people in comparison to other age groups, and by 2012 almost one quarter of those aged 16 to 24 were unemployed<sup>14</sup>.
- 3.5 In 2017 the national strategy [Prosperity for All](#) set out the aim of building a prosperous & secure, healthy & active, ambitious & learning, united & connected Wales. Employability is a core theme within the strategy, with an integrative and collaborative approach putting people at the heart of improved service delivery. Furthermore, the ‘Prosperity for All’ strategy set out a series of actions that underpin the Ambitious and Learning theme, including the “development of a new employability plan for Wales focusing on the diverse needs of individuals, and responsive to the particular skills needs of each part of the country”.
- 3.6 The 2018 [Employability Plan](#) outlined how the Welsh Government planned to deliver employability support in a smart and joined-up way with:
- An individualised approach.
  - Underlining the responsibility of employers to upskill workers, support staff, and provide fair work.
  - Responding to current/projected skills gaps.
  - Preparing for a radical shift in the world of work.

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<sup>14</sup> Ipsos MORI, Wavehill & Wiserd (2016) Evaluation of Jobs Growth Wales – Final Report, Welsh Government, Cardiff.

## COVID-19

- 3.7 On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the British public were instructed by the Prime Minister to stay at home other than for a limited set of specific purposes. Over the subsequent 15-month period, lockdowns and social distancing requirements were implemented, although the regulations varied in different periods.
- 3.8 Evidence of the negative impacts of the pandemic was published by Public Health Wales in their report [Public Health Wales \(2022\) 'Protecting the mental wellbeing of our future generations: learning from COVID-19 for the long term: A Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment Approach'](#). This highlighted the recognition that the negative physical and mental health effects of COVID-19 will have a more lasting effect, particularly for young people and those in insecure and low-paid employment.
- 3.9 The [Renew And Reform Post-16 And Transitions Plan](#) (2023) sets out the way in which the WG intends to work with providers of post-16 education to support learners beyond the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the Renew and Reform programme: supporting learners' wellbeing and progression. This plan outlines the approach that the WG will use over the next three years to shape and implement support. In collaboration with the Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Learners project, the transition plan will help those already disadvantaged groups that have further been disproportionately affected by the disruption to post-16 education and training due to COVID-19.

## Young Person's Guarantee

- 3.10 In the [Employability Plan](#) in March 2022 the Welsh Government identified JGW+ as a key mechanism through which the delivery of a Young Person's Guarantee (YPG) as well as attainment of the relevant National Milestone<sup>15</sup> will be achieved.
- 3.11 The YPG is the Welsh Government's commitment to everyone aged 16–24, and living in Wales, to gain a place in education or training and help to get into work or become self-employed. It aims to ease the difficult labour market transitions that young people may face in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, which impacted on the education, skills and health & well-being of young people.
- 3.12 It also seeks to create a clear, simple and sustainable employability model and pathway for young people in Wales in the years ahead to deliver a fairer and more inclusive economy for all. Employability support approaches alongside JGW+ include:
- resources on the Careers Wales website
  - an impartial entry point via Working Wales
  - tracking/reporting for those accessing the YPG via Working Wales
  - help in finding an apprenticeship
  - community employability programmes (including Communities for Work Plus)
  - self-employment support — Business Wales/Big Ideas Wales
  - partner programmes, including those delivered by the DWP and local authorities
  - Regional Skills Partnership delivery of specific activity supporting young people's skills as well as access to education and employment.<sup>16</sup>
- 3.13 A refreshed YEPF was [published in September 2022](#) with strengthening in the framework with the aim of ensuring that:

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<sup>15</sup> This refers to National Milestone 22, where at least 90 per cent of 16–24-year-olds will be in education, employment or training by 2050. See [National indicators and national milestones for Wales \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#) for more details on the milestones and their context.

<sup>16</sup> This includes creating Young People Specific Employment and Skills Plans; developing Skills Roadmaps/Learner Pathways guides; Careers Information, Advice and Guidance finders; Work Experience databases; running young-people-focused summits; and linking schools and colleges and running various engagement sessions with young people on their lived experiences.



- More young people move on to a destination that is right for them when they leave school, whether that is EET.
- Young people are prevented from becoming homeless.
- Young people experience positive emotional mental health and well-being, as a result of their being engaged in activity that is meaningful to them, and where they feel that they are on the right path.

### **Strategic context**

- 3.14 Further key strategic context for the evaluation is provided by the Programme for Government 2021–2026 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
- 3.15 The [Programme for Government 2021–2026 update](#) (PfG) includes the commitment to providing decent jobs, relevant skills, and new training opportunities. The update sets out three employability milestones<sup>17</sup> to be achieved by 2050:
- at least 90 per cent of 16–24-year-olds will be in education, employment or training.
  - to eliminate the employment rate gap between in Wales and the UK, focusing on fair work and raising labour market participation of underrepresented groups; and
  - to remove the pay gap for gender, ethnicity and disability.
- 3.16 The programme also aligns with the seven shared national well-being goals enacted by the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act \(2015\)](#). The goals include A Prosperous Wales (which aims to develop a skilled and well-educated population in an economy that generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work). Therefore, it will be important for the evaluation to assess this strategic alignment and the contributions that the programme is making to these aims.

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<sup>17</sup> See [National indicators and national milestones for Wales \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#) for more details on the milestones and their context.

- 3.17 [Cymru Can](#) sets out the 2023–2030 strategy and the long-term vision, namely that Cymru is a better place in which to live and has a bright and optimistic future — thriving, inclusive and green. In achieving this vision there are five visions including the creation of a well-being economy that puts people and the planet first.
- 3.18 It is expected that JGW+ will create conditions for promoting the Welsh language and, therefore, align with the WG’s Welsh language strategy, i.e. [Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers](#). A core aim of the strategy is to “develop post-compulsory education provision which increases rates of progression and supports everyone, whatever their command of the language, to develop Welsh language skills for use socially and in the workplace” (Cymraeg 2050: 32).
- 3.19 It identifies three strategic themes with which to achieve the vision set out in the strategy:
- Increasing the number of Welsh speakers.
  - Increasing the use of Welsh (including in the workplace).
  - Creating favourable conditions — infrastructure and context (including community and economy).
- 3.20 The [Race Equality Action Plan](#) (REAP) for Wales outlined a number of employability aims to be completed by April 2023 in relation to improved accessibility, better outcomes for ethnic minority groups, and to offer a safe, positive and inclusive environment for all staff and students, where racial harassment and discrimination are addressed.

- 3.21 The [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) (ARWAP), which sets out the vision of “A Wales which is anti-racist” by 2030, builds on the REAP and aims to make a measurable change to the lives of ethnic minority people by tackling racism. The plan focuses on six areas in which people from ethnic minority communities experience racism, namely everyday life, service delivery, workplace, jobs & opportunities, lack of visible role models in positions of power, and being a refugee or asylum seeker. On employability and skills, the plan recognises the need to take further action to tackle structural and systemic racism that prevents people from accessing the skills, training and employment prospects that exist in Wales.
- 3.22 These efforts towards equality and inclusion are further reinforced by the Welsh Government’s continued commitment to the Social Model of Disability across policy and service delivery by addressing the barriers for disabled people to access and participate in its employability programmes.
- 3.23 Disability in social model terms is focused more widely on the inequality, disadvantage, disempowerment or discrimination that people with impairments may experience because of barriers to access and inclusion but is separate from their impairment. If the barriers are removed, then the disability is removed.
- 3.24 In July 2021 the Welsh Government published [Locked out: liberating disabled people’s lives and rights in Wales beyond COVID-19](#), which investigates the impact of COVID-19 on disabled people in Wales and calls for immediate action to reaffirm the commitment to the Social Model of Disability.
- 3.25 In May 2022 the Welsh Government published [Learning Disability Strategic Action Plan 2022 to 2026](#), outlining a strategic agenda to develop and implement learning disability policy for the term of government to 2026. It includes specific commitments regarding education, employment and skills<sup>18</sup> that seek to ensure access to services and support for young people with additional learning needs, including the advent of supported apprenticeships as part of a mechanism with which to increase employment opportunities for people with a learning disability.

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<sup>18</sup> See Key Themes 5 and 6 in [Learning Disability Strategic Action Plan 2022 to 2026 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#).

## **Trends in the number of young people who are NEET**

3.26 There are three main data sources that are used for understanding the number of young people NEET in Wales. These are:

- Statistical First Release (SFR) series.
- Annual Population Survey (APS) series.
- Pupil destinations from schools in Wales.

3.27 The Welsh Government consider the SFR series to provide the most robust estimates of young people who are NEET<sup>19</sup>. The estimates published in the SFR are a measure of the proportion of young people who are NEET as at the end of the calendar year and are derived by combining a range of sources.

- Education enrolments account for:
  - schools from the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) (Welsh Government);
  - further education and work-based learning from the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) (Welsh Government);
  - higher education from the Higher Education Statistics Agency and the Open University.
- Population estimates as at the end of the calendar year (Office for National Statistics and the Welsh Government).
- Annual Population Survey, which is used to estimate the proportion of those not in education or training who are unemployed or inactive, and relates to the whole of the reference year.

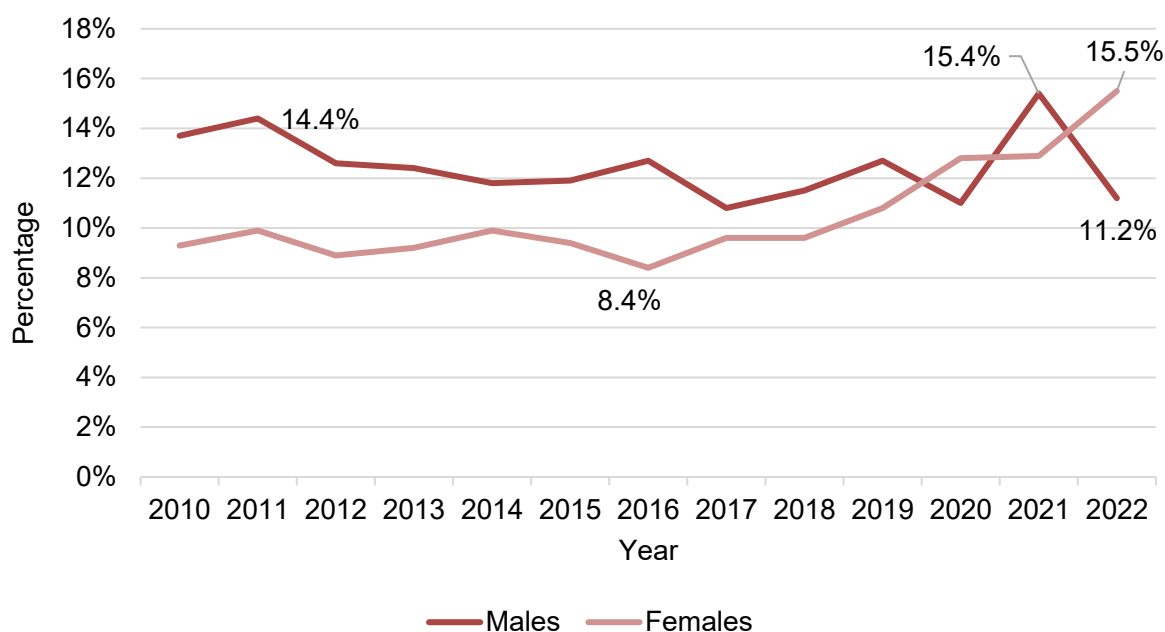
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<sup>19</sup> See <https://www.gov.wales/understanding-different-sources-statistics-young-people-not-education-employment-or-training-neet> for further details.

### SFR series data

3.28 Figure 3.1 below presents an analysis of the SFR data over time (since 2010) and shows that, despite a spike (an anomaly in 2021), the proportion of males aged 16–18 who are NEET steadily decreased over time from 14.4 per cent in 2011 to 11.2 per cent in 2022. Amongst females the reverse is the case, with the rates of 16–18-year-old NEETs almost doubling over the 2016–22 period from 8.4 per cent to 15.5 per cent. In terms of numerical change this equates to an estimated 8,100 females aged 16–18 who are NEET in Wales in 2022 in comparison to 4,300 in 2016 (an increase of 3,800). Across both genders an estimated 14,400 16–18-year-olds were NEET in 2022 in comparison to a low of 10,600 in 2017, an increase of 35.8 per cent.

**Figure 3.1: Estimated percentage of 16–18-year-olds in Wales not in education, training or employment by gender, 2010–2022**



Source: ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates and Annual Population Survey (APS), Welsh Government analysis of Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) and Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) data<sup>20</sup> Annual Population Survey

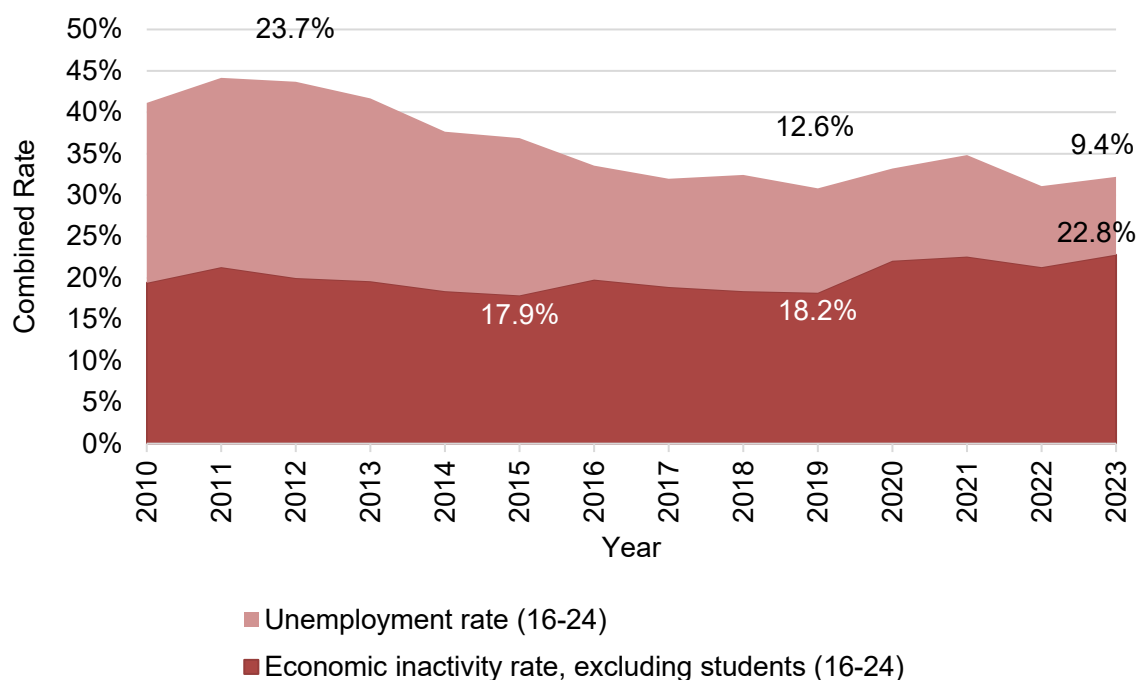
<sup>20</sup> The Welsh Government release of the most recent data can be found at [Participation of young people in education and the labour market: 2021 and 2022 \(provisional\) | GOV.WALES](#).

- 3.29 As outlined earlier within this section, the first Jobs Growth Wales programme was prompted by a considerable increase in rates of unemployment amongst those aged 16–24 in Wales. Figure 3.2 below illustrates that in the year ending June 2012, almost one in four of all young people aged 16–24 were unemployed. Rates of unemployment amongst this age cohort have decreased over time to the extent that in the year ending June 2023, less than one in 10 young people aged 16–24 were registered as unemployed. Rates of economic inactivity (excluding students) have remained more consistent; however, from the year ending June 2018 these increased from 18.2 per cent to 22.8 per cent in the year ending June 2023. Collectively, these increases have been offset by reductions in unemployment but suggest a changing dynamic amongst young people who are not economically active.
- 3.30 Figures 3.2a and 3.2b present those profiles by gender. They illustrate how amongst males there has been a steady decrease in the proportion of males unemployed from almost 25 per cent in 2011 to 11.4 per cent. Conversely, economic inactivity (excluding students) steadily increased from 11.5 per cent in 2011 to 21.8 per cent in 2022. Amongst females, almost half were either unemployed or economically inactive (excluding students) in 2013. Since 2013 there has been a steady reduction, particularly so for the rates of unemployment. The latest data show that around 31 per cent of participants are either unemployed (7.3 per cent) or economically inactive (23.8 per cent).
- 3.31 Collectively, these charts show that economic inactivity (excluding those who are students) is increasingly prevalent across both genders within the 16–24 age cohort, replicating increasing levels across the UK. Long-term health conditions including poor mental health are an increasing cause of this inactivity amongst this age group.<sup>21</sup>

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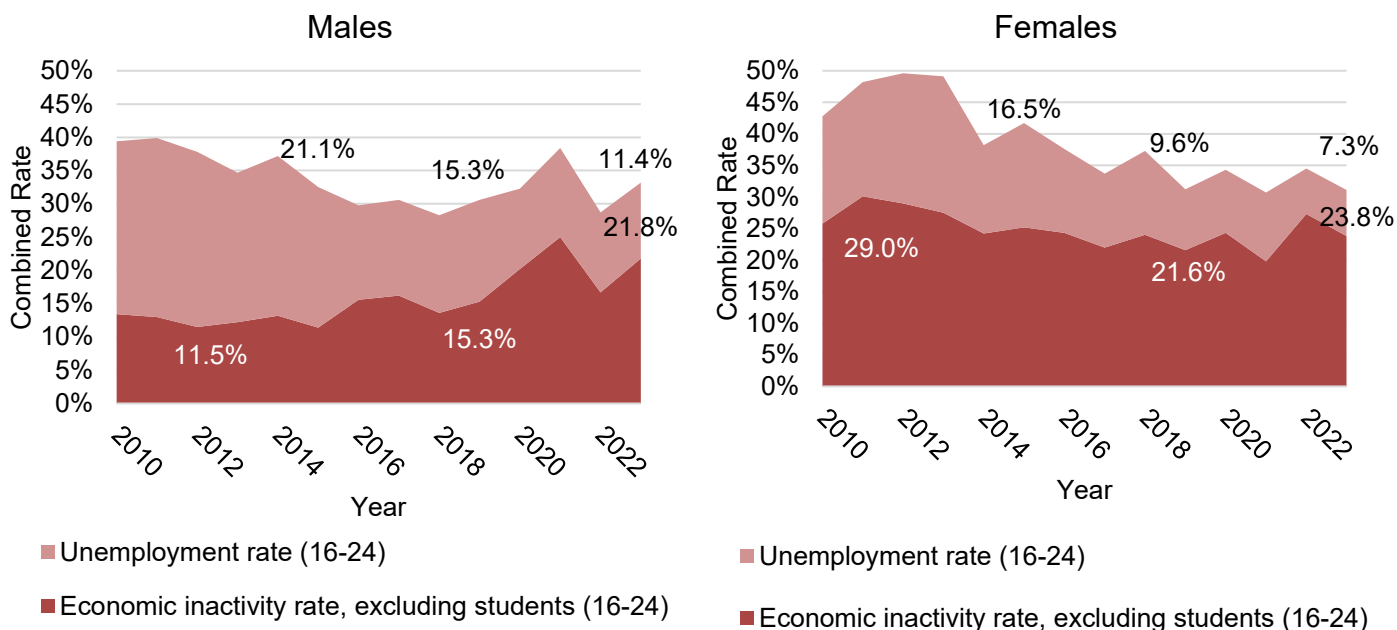
<sup>21</sup> See work undertaken by the Resolution Foundation highlighting increasing levels of poor mental health amongst 16–24-year-olds ([We've only just begun • Resolution Foundation](#)) as well as labour market updates by the Institute for Employment Studies ([Labour Market Briefing March 2024](#)).

**Figure 3.2: Rates of unemployment and economic inactivity (excluding students) amongst 16–24-year-olds in Wales, year ending June 2010 to June 2023**



Source: Annual Population Survey

**Figure 3.2a and b: Rates of unemployment and economic inactivity (excluding students) amongst 16–24-year-olds in Wales by gender, year ending June 2010 to June 2023**



Source: Annual Population Survey

**Pupil destinations from schools in Wales**

3.32 The Year 11 destination survey provides insight into the destination of young people over time from maintained schools in Wales. The survey is conducted at the end of October and provides an understanding of the initial destination of young people after Year 11. Table 3.1 below presents patterns of destinations over time. Most are relatively static; however, it is notable that in 2022 (the latest year for which evidence is available) the NEET figure had increased by 0.5 percentage points from 1.6 per cent to 2.1 per cent.

**Table 3.1: Year 11 destinations data over time<sup>22</sup>**

Year	Continuing in education (FT & PT)	Work-based training – employed & non-employed status <sup>23</sup>	Employed – other	Known NEET	No response to survey	Left the area
2022	88.4%	4.4%	3.4%	2.1%	1.0%	0.7%
2021	88.9%	5.0%	2.8%	1.6%	1.1%	0.5%
2020	90.5%	4.4%	2.0%	1.7%	0.9%	0.5%
2019	88.4%	5.7%	2.5%	1.8%	1.1%	0.6%
2018	86.6%	5.5%	2.3%	1.6%	3.5%	0.5%
2017	88.5%	6.4%	2.3%	1.6%	0.5%	0.7%

Source: Careers Wales (2017–22) Pupil Destinations

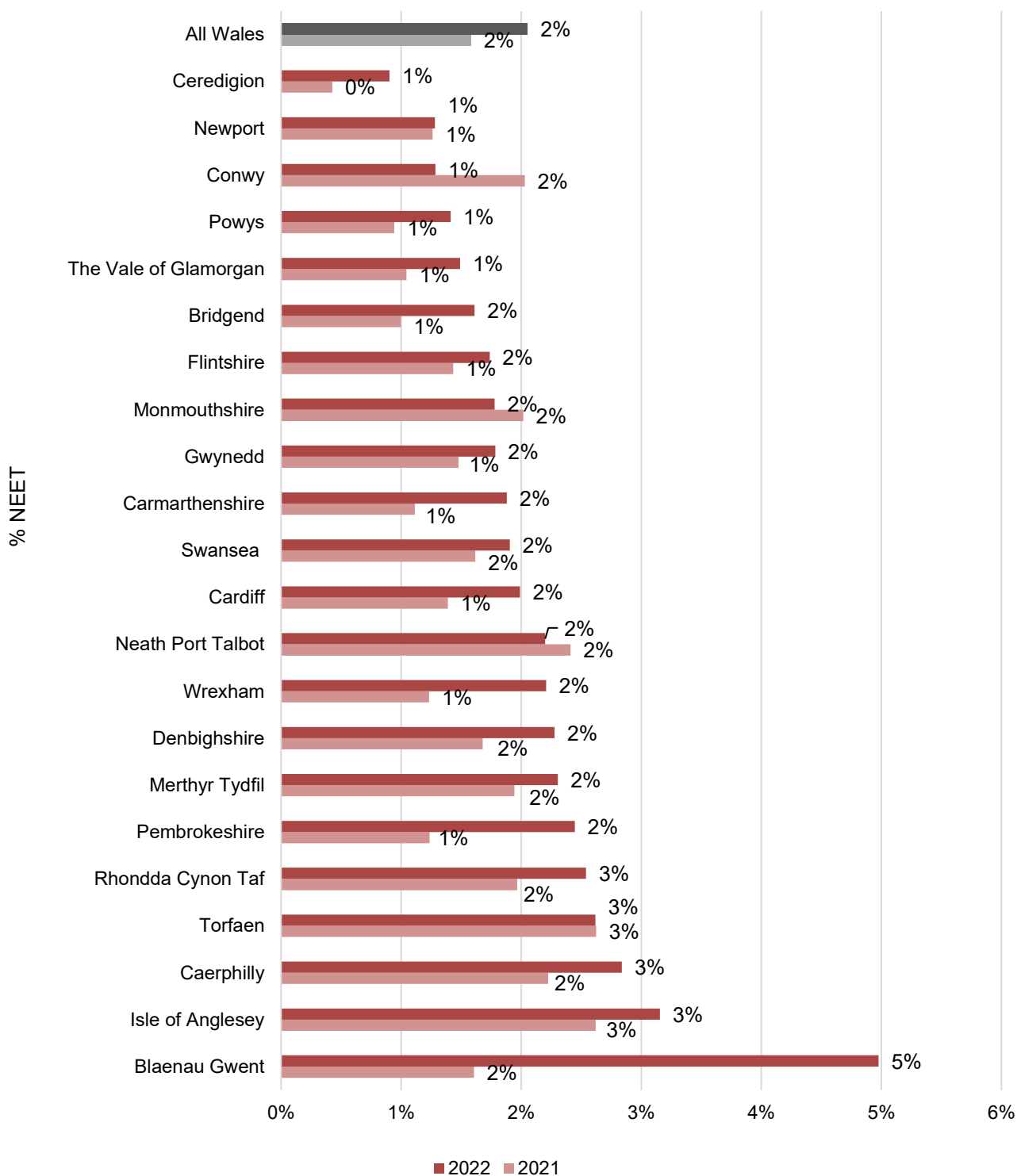
3.33 Analysis of the Year 11 destination survey at the local authority level is presented in Figure 3.3 below. It shows that rates of respondents known to be NEET were highest in Blaenau Gwent, on Anglesey and in Caerphilly local authority areas and that in the vast majority of authority areas the proportion known to be NEET had increased when compared to 2021.

<sup>22</sup> <https://careerswales.gov.wales/education-and-teaching-professionals/pupil-destinations>.

<sup>23</sup> This includes apprenticeships and other forms of work-based learning.



**Figure 3.3: Percentage of respondents to the Year 11 destination survey known to be NEET by local authority (2021 and 2022)**



Source: Year 11 Destination Survey, Careers Wales

## Section Summary

- There is a clear and consistent focus within Welsh Government policy associated with tackling the prevalence of young people who are NEET in Wales.
- There is evidence of an increase in the number of young people NEET in Wales in the 12 months to October 2022. An increasing proportion of that NEET group are individuals classed as economically inactive (excluding students), with fewer classed as unemployed, reflecting increasing levels of long-term ill health (including poor mental health) amongst young people.
- The gender profile of young people NEET is also changing. Within the most recent data, females aged 16–18 outnumber males who are NEET, with the proportion of NEET young people having almost doubled (from 8.4 per cent to 15.5 per cent from 2016–2022).

## **4. Design and Implementation**

### **Introduction**

- 4.1 This section reviews the design and implementation of JGW+ and outlines how the programme design has reflected on previous iterations of Jobs Growth Wales and Traineeships.

### **Origins of the JGW+ programme**

- 4.2 JGW+ originally aimed to provide a holistic, tailored programme of ongoing needs assessment and support for 16–18-year-olds who are NEET, which was widened to 16–19 in 2023 to reflect the greater complexity of need demonstrated by participants joining the programme. JGW+ had been designed to build on the best aspects of comparable legacy employability programmes — Traineeships, and two earlier iterations of the Jobs Growth Wales (JGW) programme.

### **Traineeships**

- 4.3 The [Traineeships Programme in Wales](#) sought to reduce the proportion of 16–19-year-olds in Wales classified as NEET, facilitate progression to employment or further learning, and increase participants' confidence and motivation.
- 4.4 The initial funding for the Traineeships Programme ran from 2011–2015 and was seen to make a valuable contribution to the work-readiness of those involved, as well as surpassing many of its targets. JGW+ development drew on evaluation findings that highlighted that there was a need for greater flexibility in provision, an enhanced focus on employer engagement to secure a sufficient number of good work placements, increased collaboration amongst providers, and to extend the length of lower-intensity support to young people.

4.5 A subsequent 2016–2019 Traineeships Programme evaluation<sup>24</sup> showed positive estimates of the programme’s net present value, with almost one third of participants securing employment. However, the final evaluation acknowledged that whilst greater flexibility was seen in the refined delivery model, there remained scope to flex this offer further, and that the need to enhance employer engagement remained.

### **JGW**

4.6 The original [JGW programme](#) sought to engage unemployed young people in a wider age group (16–24) than that of the Traineeships running at the same time and the current focus of JGW+, with the aim of giving them valuable work experience for a six-month period paid at or above the National Minimum Wage (NMW) supported by a wage subsidy. It was launched in April 2012 against a backdrop of recession, where concerns surrounding the longer-term impact of young unemployment were substantial and ran until 2015.

4.7 JGW was conceived and implemented within a tight timeframe and whilst it successfully delivered a large number of job outcomes, it was constrained by its complexity (with four delivery strands) as well as issues associated with deadweight (which related (in part) to broad parameters associated with participant eligibility for the programme).<sup>25</sup>

### **JGW 2**

4.8 [JGW 2](#) launched in 2016 with a streamlined delivery structure in comparison to that of JGW (to reduce complexity), and a reduction in the level of wage subsidy (to help reduce levels of deadweight). It secured much success, but that success was concentrated amongst those closest to the labour market, with an absence of a wraparound support offer for those unsuccessful in securing employment. Those unsuccessful in securing employment were typically young people needing additional support to improve their employability and be ‘job-ready’.

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<sup>24</sup> See [Traineeships Programme in Wales](#) for more details of the evaluation and its findings.

<sup>25</sup> See [Evaluation of Jobs Growth Wales](#) for more details on the evaluation findings.

## **Job Support Wales**

4.9 The Welsh Government sought to address the issues identified (amongst others) through the development of a new flagship all-age employability programme — Job Support Wales. This was a national programme designed to support people of all ages to overcome barriers and gain the skills with which to achieve and maintain good-quality, sustainable employment. The programme was to include a series of strands (including those for Youth Engagement and Youth Training for those aged 16–18 on engagement). Due to launch in April 2020, challenges associated with procurement for service suppliers for that programme ultimately led to a redesign of the delivery model and the introduction of JGW+.

### **JGW+**

4.10 JGW+ sought to take the best elements of Traineeships and Jobs Growth Wales above to provide every young person with whom it works with an offer of employment, training, voluntary work, or self-employment as well as a concurrent holistic, tailored package of support for young people who are or who are at risk of becoming NEET (not in employment, education or training). It seeks to provide an employability offer for young people in Wales in line with the YPG and YEPF.

4.11 Programme commissions are awarded annually. Contractors for each of the four regions have been appointed from the following, with the partnerships agreeing the specifics of regional arrangements:

- ACT
- Coleg Cambria
- Grŵp Llandrillo Menai (GLLM)
- Itec Skills
- Pembrokeshire College.

- 4.12 Table 4.1 shows delivery regions for JGW+ and the projected share of participants in Wales to be supported by each region.
- 4.13 The JGW+ programme came into operation for new starts on 1 April 2022. The programme initially benefitted from a transfer of existing participants from the Traineeships Programme to JGW+, and an analysis of management information suggests that around 1,800 young people transferred to the programme from Traineeships.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Based on the number of participants who enrolled in the programme on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 across all Contractors.

**Table 4.1: JGW+ delivery regions**

<b>Regional Lot</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Local authority areas covered</b>	<b>Main delivery Contractors</b>	<b>Participant proportion</b>	<b>Proportion of total 16–19-year-old population</b>
<b>Lot 1</b>	<b>North Wales</b>	Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Isle of Anglesey, Wrexham	ACT, GLLM, and Coleg Cambria	12%	20%
<b>Lot 2</b>	<b>South West and Mid Wales</b>	Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Swansea, Ceredigion, Powys	Pembrokeshire College, ACT, and Itec	25%	29%
<b>Lot 3</b>	<b>South Central Wales</b>	Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Vale of Glamorgan	ACT and Itec	38%	33%
<b>Lot 4</b>	<b>South East Wales</b>	Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen	ACT and Itec	25%	17%

Source: Original JGW+ programme Specification. Population data from 2021 Census via Nomis, Crown Copyright.

## **JGW+ delivery model**

### **Referral to JGW+**

- 4.14 When originally launched in April 2022, JGW+ operated with a referral system via Working Wales (delivered by Careers Wales), who operate to provide a single all-Wales entry point to employability support. At the time, no other referral routes to the programme were possible. The rationale behind the referral model was that it enabled potential participants to talk to trained career advisors about employment and skills, their aims and aspirations, and any challenges that they face in obtaining and maintaining work, education or training.
- 4.15 Advice and guidance are provided on a face-to-face basis at Careers Wales offices, local Jobcentres, or community outreach locations as well as via the telephone and online. As noted above, advice does not just come from Careers Wales/Working Wales.
- 4.16 Advisors help by identifying barriers preventing an individual from accessing employment, education or training. Based on individuals' circumstances and aspirations, trained career advisors identify the most suitable provision available to support the individual in progressing.
- 4.17 The identification of barriers and needs of the young people is captured within an Assessment and Referral Report (ARR) which uses an advice- and guidance-led 'categorisation assessment' of an individual's circumstances, along with their barriers, to illustrate the relevance of a referral to JGW+ (rather than other employability routes).
- 4.18 The assessment also measures an individual's distance from the labour market and the likely support needed to facilitate a transition to work. These indicators (e.g. length of unemployment, caring responsibilities, housing status) are informed by academic research<sup>27</sup>. If referred to JGW+, this assessment will inform to which strand (engagement, advancement, or employment) the young person is referred.
- 4.19 The three strands of JGW+ reflect differentiated levels of interventions available to meet the diverse needs of individuals associated with their distance from mainstream education or employment as assessed upon referral.

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<sup>27</sup> See Brown, C., Rueda, P., Batlle, I. & Sallán, J. (2021). Introduction to the special issue: a conceptual framework for researching the risks to early leaving, [Journal of Education and Work, 34:7-8, 723-739](#) for a useful summary.



- 4.20 Since the summer of 2022, eligible 16–18-year-olds have been able to refer themselves directly to the programme without engaging with Working Wales to be assessed for entry to the programme (direct referrals). This was done to improve access to JGW+ for those young people who were the ‘hardest to reach’ and were not engaging through the Working Wales service. These direct referrals are assessed by Contractors using their own needs assessment tools drafted with guidance from the Welsh Government to ensure consistent and effective assessment.
- 4.21 The ARR, or (where there is a direct referral) Contractor assessment, for each individual entering JGW+ is expected to identify:
- The learning and/or developmental needs of the young person.
  - Any barrier(s) preventing the young person from participating in further learning and/or progressing to employment to be addressed as part of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP).
  - Key evidence of need that JGW+ Contractors must take into account when creating the young person’s ILP and subsequent progress reviews.
- 4.22 Table 4.2 provides an overview of the nature of support offered for each of the programme strands at the programme launch (April 2022).

**Table 4.2: Overview of JGW+ support strands – at programme start in April 2022**

	<b>Engagement</b>	<b>Advancement</b>	<b>Employment</b>
<b>Suitable for young people who:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to confirm/contextualise an occupational focus to support entry to further learning or employment (including an apprenticeship); and/or</li> <li>• Have barriers preventing them from engaging in Level 1 study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are occupationally focused; and</li> <li>• Able to follow a programme of study leading to a Level 1 or Level 2 qualification but assessed as being unable to study to Level 3 or above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are occupationally focused; and</li> <li>• Job-ready</li> </ul>
<b>Lead worker support provides:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailored support to tackle barriers identified in the ARR</li> <li>• Learning and developmental support activities as listed in the ILP, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Centre-based learning opportunities with the JGW+ provider</li> <li>○ Short work trials</li> <li>○ Local work placements (up to four weeks)</li> <li>○ Community projects</li> <li>○ Voluntary work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Delivery of qualifications relevant to the engagement strand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailored support to tackle barriers identified in the ARR</li> <li>• Learning and developmental support activities as listed in the ILP, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Centre-based learning opportunities with the JGW+ provider</li> <li>○ Local work trials/placements</li> <li>○ Community projects</li> <li>○ Voluntary work.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Delivery of qualifications relevant to the advancement strand</li> <li>• Participants will be assessed to enable continuation through to the employment strand.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailored support to tackle barriers identified in the ARR</li> <li>• Learning and developmental support in work-related activities to progress to sustainable employment</li> <li>• Wage-subsidised employment opportunities.</li> </ul> <p>Participants will have found a supporting employer within 10 weeks of joining this strand.</p>
<b>Financial support:</b>	£30-per-week training allowance	£55-per-week training allowance	£55-per-week training allowance

Source: adapted from JGW+ programme Specification (September 2021 – version 1.2)

## **Governance**

- 4.23 Each Contractor is allocated a Contract Manager from within the Welsh Government to act as a dedicated point of contact. The Contract Manager's role is to review Contractor performance and provide appropriate challenge and support to enable effective delivery of support in the JGW+ programme. Contract Review Meetings take place on a quarterly basis. Contract management is linked to performance thresholds for positive destination outcomes. All Contractors are targeted with securing positive destination outcomes for at least 60 per cent of all participants (and 75 per cent of participants enrolled in the employment strand of the programme).
- 4.24 Whilst the contract management model was designed to ensure compliance, it also sought to underpin collaborative partnership working between Contractors across regional delivery. Furthermore, acknowledging that there are multiple Contractors delivering within the same geography, the Welsh Government sought to avoid any issues of competition by designing contracts around allocations of funding to meet their respective targets. This was supported by the introduction of collaboration agreements, drafted between each regional grouping of Contractors to support positive collaborative working within each region (Lot).
- 4.25 Contractor network meetings are held regularly, with the frequency typically every 4–6 weeks, where good practice and challenges are shared. The removal of the competitive nature of contracts intentionally sought to encourage this partnership and collaborative activity amongst the Contractors.

## **Funding model**

- 4.26 The costs (and therefore the funding allocation) of delivering the JGW+ programme have been derived from historic data for the uptake of Traineeships and Jobs Growth Wales provision across the regions of Wales for 2017/18 and 2018/19.
- 4.27 Each contract year the Contractor receives an allocation profiled by the Contractor into categories for Delivery, Wage Subsidies, and Support Costs up to the maximum allocation value.
- 4.28 Payments to Contractors are based on Guided Contact Hours (GCH), essentially the number of teaching, instructional or assessment contact hours for a particular learning activity. A Learning Unit (LU) is a measurement used within the payment funding model for calculating payment based on the volume of GCH. Moreover,

they are triggered through every person who is engaged in the programme. The funding model is set out in Table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3: JGW+ payment funding model at April 2022 (programme launch)**

Strand	Participant induction	Monthly delivery	
		Centre-based	Work-based
Engagement	3 LUs	1 LU for every 3 hours of GCH	1 LU for every 8 hours of GCH
Advancement	3 LUs	1 LU for every 4 hours of GCH	1 LU for employment —
Employment			wage-subsidised employment every 13 hours of GCH

Source: Jobs Growth Wales Plus programme Specification version 1.2 (April 2022)

### **Employment wage subsidy**

4.29 Where a participant has secured employment through the employment strand of JGW+, employers will be reimbursed a wage subsidy for JGW+ participants that is equivalent to six months (26 weeks) at 50 per cent of the National Minimum Wage.

### **Adjustments to the JGW+ delivery model**

4.30 In January 2023 a series of changes were proposed for the JGW+ programme<sup>28</sup> in response to Contractor feedback following programme implementation. This included concerns surrounding the escalation in levels of need that Contractors were seeing in the young people now presenting to them. They (Contractors) were clear that the cohort now being referred to the programme were much more likely to be suitable only for the engagement strand (given the potential distance from the labour market with which they were presenting).

<sup>28</sup> Welsh Government (2023) JGW+ programme Notice of Change – Final Version, 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023 (unpublished).

- 4.31 This meant that candidates for support had much more complex needs and barriers, which Contractors and EPC staff concurred were a direct result of the detrimental effects on young people arising from COVID-19 lockdowns as well as their limited access to formal educational settings during this time.
- 4.32 There were concerns from Contractors in scoping interviews that a pre-pandemic programme design may not adequately reflect the increase in barriers and the complexity of issues that these young people now face if they wish to find employment, or their uncertainty surrounding their next step options. Therefore, whilst there was a raised need for the support that the programme provides, the needs that it addresses are also likely to be more complex. Consequently, it was expected by Contractors, and has been seen, that support will take longer to deliver than the 12 weeks anticipated pre-pandemic, with MI data showing on average Contractors working with participants for around 26 weeks in the engagement strand.
- 4.33 In the initial months of the programme there had been fewer referrals than expected from Working Wales to JGW+. At the time this was thought to reflect a high level of vacancies in the retail and hospitality sectors, meaning that many young people were finding employment more easily than previously. However, many roles in these sectors are insecure and relatively low-paid and, thus, do not offer the same prospects or support as those of JGW+.
- 4.34 It was also noted that many of the young people with the highest levels of need would not necessarily approach Working Wales directly themselves, and support and more active outreach are often needed to make the first connection with Working Wales.
- 4.35 This was problematic for Contractors because the design of their delivery models had been predicated on greater volumes of referral, and amongst those who have been referred, less complex cases with fewer barriers to address with cohorts closer to the labour market than have been seen. This means that expected costs of delivery during the implementation phase had been higher with fewer enrolments or transitions to the advancement and employment strands than expected.

- 4.36 There were also concerns amongst Contractors regarding the economic climate coupled with the cost-of-living crisis placing additional pressures on the longer-term financial viability of delivery. It was felt that the latter in particular would be placing increased pressures on young people to find paid employment more immediately because of the financial pressures faced by their own household.
- 4.37 There were also concerns that this could lead to a decline in the number of employment opportunities available through the programme, or that young people would feel pressured into accepting other employment opportunities outside of the programme that offered higher pay than the JGW+ training allowance.
- 4.38 Against that context, the following changes (alongside the implementation of direct referral, which pre-dated these revisions) were proposed (and implemented from December 2022 and January 2023, with some payment measures backdated to the programme start in April 2022):
- A broadening of ‘Enrichment Activities’ for those engaged in the programme identified as likely to benefit from intervention to:
    - Promote well-being, and/or
    - Promote engagement and incentivise the young person to stay in the programme and/or progress with their programme of learning where they may be at risk of disengaging or dropping out.
  - The introduction of Pre-Programme Engagement Activity ‘Get Ready’ for young people whom the Contractor has assessed as:
    - Requiring a less formal introduction to learning, and
    - In need of support to advance to more formal learning.

- An increase in the Rate of the Training Allowance and suspending the requirement for learners to pay a contribution towards travel costs:
  - For engagement, advancement, and employment (where they are yet to commence wage-subsidised employment) strands to be paid a full £60 training allowance where participants have attended for at least 30 hours in any seven-day period (any attendance less than 30 hours will be pro-rated). This represents a doubling of the training allowance for those in the engagement strand and an increase of five pounds per week for those in the other strands.
- The provision of a free meal per day or part-day of attendance up to a maximum of £3 per day.
- To increase the rate of LUs payable for the Induction Fee for the engagement strand:
  - Contractors would be entitled to 12 LUs per participant per induction for the engagement strand. Prior to this proposal (but following the publication of the original JGW+ specification) it is understood that the rate for enrolments to all strands had increased from three LUs to six LUs per participant induction. Therefore, when compared to the original specification, this represents a quadrupling of the cost per induction set out in the April 2022 specification (from three LUs to 12 LUs).
  - The payments would be backdated to April 2022.
- Extend qualifications permissible for the JGW+ advancement strand to the Curriculum for Wales Framework (CWFw) Level 2 qualifications being permissible (in addition to the [Credit and Qualifications Framework \(CQFW\)](#) Level 1 qualifications).
- Extend the eligible age range to 19 years for enrolling in the programme from 18 years.

## Section Summary

- The design of the programme has reflected on the findings and experience of delivering previous iterations of Jobs Growth Wales and the Traineeships Programme.
- A close working relationship with the Contractors procured to deliver the programme has led to useful dialogue and informed subsequent adjustments to the programme design post-implementation.
- Adjustments to the approach have primarily been driven by greater complexity than anticipated in need encountered amongst the cohort of eligible participants as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the cost-of-living crisis and the associated pressures that this has placed on eligible participants and their households.
- The adjustments have led to considerable increases (quadrupling) in expenditure associated with the induction payment for the enrolment of participants in the engagement strand of the programme.



## 5. JGW+ Progress and Performance

### Introduction

5.1 This section presents the progress and performance of the JGW+ programme. In doing so it draws on several sources of evidence:

- **Published official statistics of the JGW+ programme** (available [here](#)) on progress against a series of high-level outcomes through the April 2022–March 2023 period.
- Additional **programme-wide statistics** shared by the Welsh Government which provide supplementary evidence behind the published datasets for the April 2022–March 2023 period.
- **Contractor management information (MI) data**<sup>29</sup>, providing detailed insight into performance and progress over time as well as emerging evidence of progress up to (and including) October 2023 from the commencement of the programme (in April 2022)<sup>30</sup>. In providing more up-to-date insight into programme performance, this dataset offers indications of the success and impact of the programme adjustments to JGW+ in early 2023. Please note that these are provisional data and exclude management information specifically related to participant outcomes from Coleg Cambria.

### Performance over time

5.2 Figure 5.1 below provides an overview of enrolments in the JGW+ programme over time using **Contractor MI data**.

5.3 The chart illustrates peaks in enrolments in July of each year (aligned with the completion of an academic year). The peak in July 2022, whilst considerable at the time, is less pronounced than that encountered in July 2023 when almost seven times the number of JGW+ participants were enrolled in comparison to June 2023 (and more than 2.5 times those enrolled in July 2022). This is likely to be associated with JGW+ becoming more established as a programme and the adjustments to the

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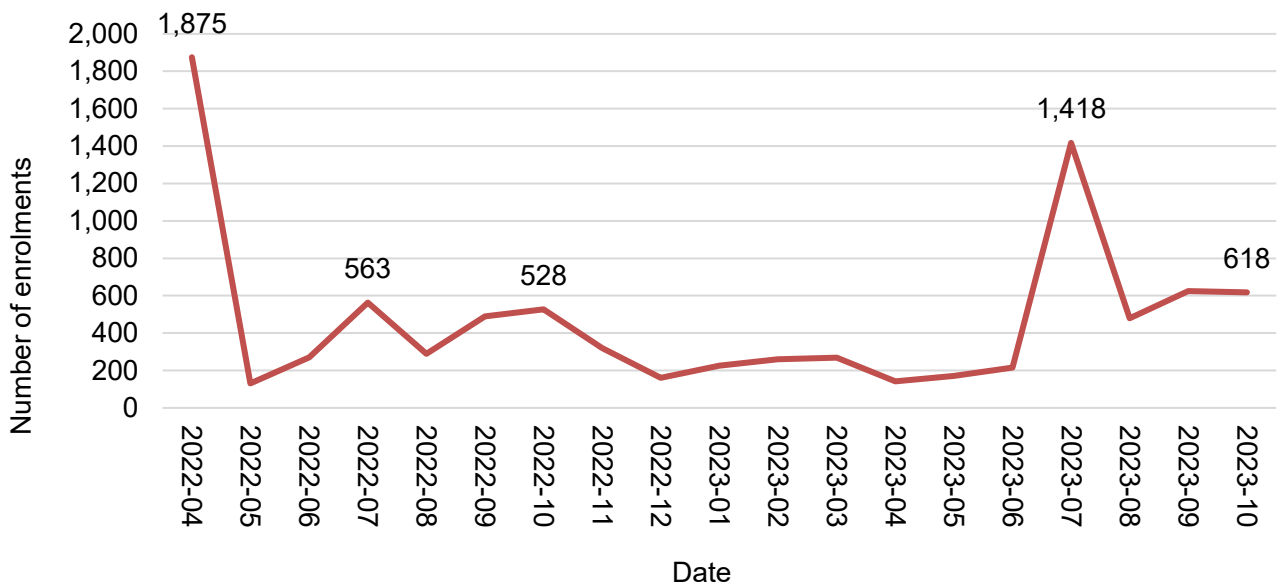
<sup>29</sup> MI data from ACT were received at the end of November 2023. MI data from ITEC, Pembrokeshire College, and GLLM were received in early December 2023. Coleg Cambria MI data were received in March 2024. Data were extracted in all cases in the month of supply to Wavehill.

<sup>30</sup> Data for Coleg Cambria commence from 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022, with all other Contractors including data for enrolments from the programme launch (April 2022). MI data have been analysed for enrolments up to (and including) October 2023 apart from Coleg Cambria, where the latest date of enrolment within their MI data is 11<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

programme offer (specifically provision offered through Get Ready, which supports students in need of additional support all year round, and was used by some Contractors as a replacement for the old Summer Sorted programme<sup>31</sup>).

- 5.4 There also appears to be a less pronounced spike in engagement in October of both academic years, potentially linked to post-16 students dropping out of EET during the October half-term (a widely recognised point in the academic year at which drop-out takes place) and transitioning to the JGW+ programme. Aside from the peak months, there is little evidence of a general uptick in rates of enrolment in the programme until July 2023 (when three of the four months secured the highest number of monthly enrolments in the programme since the programme launch).
- 5.5 When the age and the timing of enrolment are analysed against the estimated numbers of 16–18-year-olds who are NEET (as set out in section 3), it is estimated that JGW+ is engaging with around one third of NEET young people (aged 16–18) in Wales (in a 12-month period c.4,500/14,300).

**Figure 5.1: Number of JGW+ enrolments per month – April 2022–October 2023**



Source: Contractor management information<sup>32</sup>

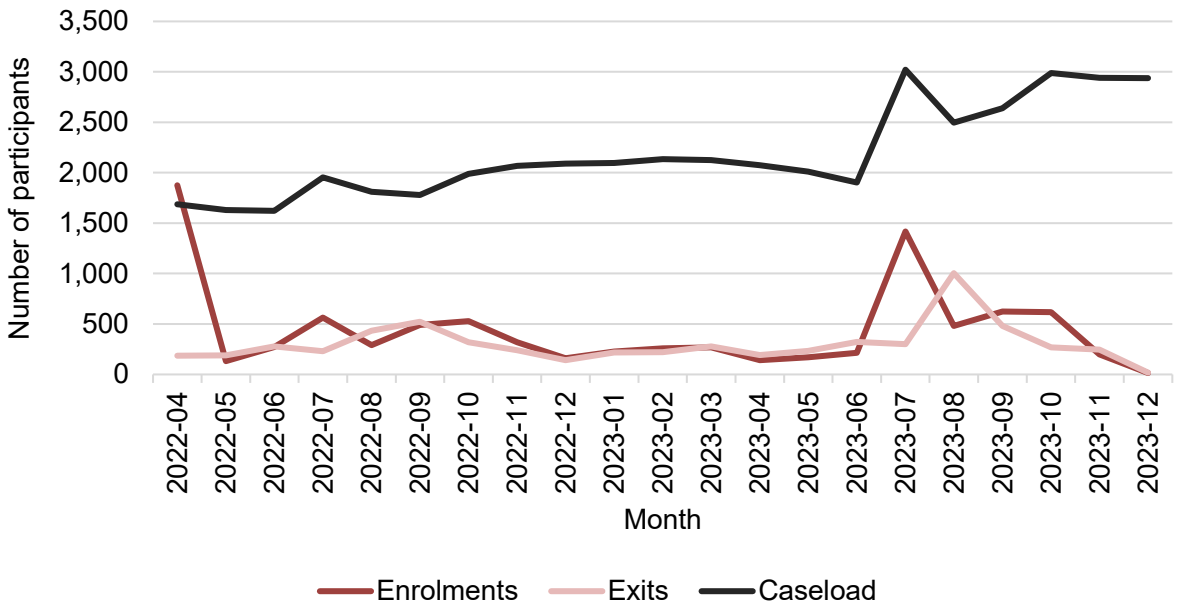
<sup>31</sup> A programme targeted at Tier 4 learners that operated in some areas over the summer period when young people were not at school.

<sup>32</sup> Please note that totals for April 2022 include participants who transferred partway through their journey from the Traineeships Programme.

5.6 According to **official statistics**<sup>33</sup>, there were 5,330 enrolments in the JGW+ programme during the 2022–23 financial year (April 2022–March 2023). At the end of this period, 2,115 learner programmes were continuing (the existing caseload of participants). Figure 5.2 below analyses enrolments in and exits from JGW+ over time and shows that caseloads remained largely static through to July 2023 before the large intake in that month boosted the numbers participating in JGW+. Those numbers remained at a higher level than in the previous year (around 2,800 participants in comparison to an average of c.1,900 participants during the April 2022–March 2023 financial year).

5.7 The adaptation in order to allow direct referrals to the programme commenced in the summer of 2022. According to WG statistics, direct referrals constituted 28 per cent (1,485/5,330) of all enrolments within the April 2022–March 2023 financial year, illustrating the early prominence of this route into the programme, whilst referrals from EPCs constituted only one per cent over the same timeframe. Many referrals, however, from EPCs were recorded as direct referrals by Contractors, whilst some EPCs still preferred to refer through Working Wales (rather than directly to Contractors). These figures therefore are likely to be an underestimate of the total number of referrals from EPCs.

**Figure 5.2: JGW+ enrolments, exits and caseloads over time**



Source: Contractor management information

<sup>33</sup> Welsh Government management information data.

## Participant profile

- 5.8 Of those who enrolled in the programme in the 2022–23 financial year, 52.6 per cent identified as male, 46.9 per cent as female, and 0.4 per cent recorded as ‘other’. Where Contractor MI has been analysed there is some variation in the gender profile by Contractor, with the proportion of female participants ranging from 43 per cent of GLLM participants to 52 per cent of participants engaged in the programme through Coleg Cambria.
- 5.9 Across the 2022–23 financial year, almost one quarter (24 per cent, 1,260/5,330) of JGW+ participants declared a form of impairment in comparison to 12.7 per cent of 15–19-year-olds and 15.7 per cent of individuals aged 20 to 24<sup>34</sup>. Most commonly, these related to:
- Dyslexia (5.8 per cent of enrolments).
  - Autistic spectrum disorders (4.6 per cent of enrolments).
  - Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (3.6 per cent of enrolments).
  - Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (3.3 per cent of enrolments).
- 5.10 Amongst the participants who enrolled during the April 2022–October 2023 period, excluding where ethnicity was not provided or was not known (n=110), 94.0 per cent described themselves as white. The distribution of participants by ethnicity is presented in Table 5.1 below (compared with the Welsh population aged between 16 and 19) and suggests that those participating in JGW+ are less ethnically diverse than the general 16–19-year-old population in Wales.

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<sup>34</sup> Census data 2021.

**Table 5.1: Participant enrolments to JGW+ by ethnicity – April 2022–October 2023**

All ethnic groups	JGW+ MI data	Welsh population 16–19
White (Welsh/English/Scottish/Northern Irish/British/Other)	94.0%	90.3%
Black	1.3%	1.4%
Asian	1.3%	4.3%
Mixed	1.8%	2.8%
Other	1.6%	1.3%

Source: Contractor MI data, Population data from 2021 Census

- 5.11 Amongst all participants in the **Contractor MI data**, 18 per cent (1,685/9,263) enrolled since the programme start were recorded as Welsh speakers (eight per cent (731/9,263) were fluent). An analysis of the Contractor MI identifies that Welsh speakers have become increasingly prevalent amongst the JGW+ programme participants over time, with 20 per cent (937/4,636) of those enrolled in the 2023 calendar year recorded as Welsh speakers in comparison to 16 per cent (748/4,627) of those enrolled in 2022.
- 5.12 Over three quarters of JGW+ programme participants were 16 or 17 years old at the point of enrolment in the programme. Around four per cent of participants were 19 years old when they enrolled. This figure remains consistent when broken down by year (2022 and 2023). Whilst this might initially suggest ineligible enrolments in 2022 (when those aged 19 years were unable to enrol in JGW+), it is actually driven by the transition of Traineeships participants to the programme who turned 19 years old during the engagement with Traineeships and, therefore, transitioned and enrolled in JGW+ at the age of 19.

**Table 5.2: Age at point of enrolment to JGW+ – April 2022–December 2023**

Age at enrolment	N	%
20	1	0%
19	353	4%
18	1,326	14%
17	2,866	31%
16	4,386	47%
15	331	4%

Source: Contractor MI data

- 5.13 The Contractor MI dataset requires capture of the length of unemployment at the point of enrolment in the JGW+ programme. Just over half of participants (53 per cent, 4,849/9,117) have been recorded as short-term unemployed (NEET for less than six months), with 47 per cent recorded as long-term unemployed (NEET for more than six months). There is a clear pattern in the distribution of unemployment length by age, linked to the fact that young people are first designated as NEET (if unemployed or economically inactive (excluding students)) from the age of 16. By way of example, 60 per cent (2,640/4,375) of participants aged 16 at the point of enrolment were described as short-term unemployed, compared to 43 per cent (559/1,310) of those aged 18 at the point of enrolment.
- 5.14 When analysed by year of enrolment those recorded as long-term unemployed at the point of enrolment have increased over time. In 2023, 50 per cent of those enrolled were recorded as long-term unemployed at the point of enrolment in comparison to 44 per cent of those enrolled during 2022.

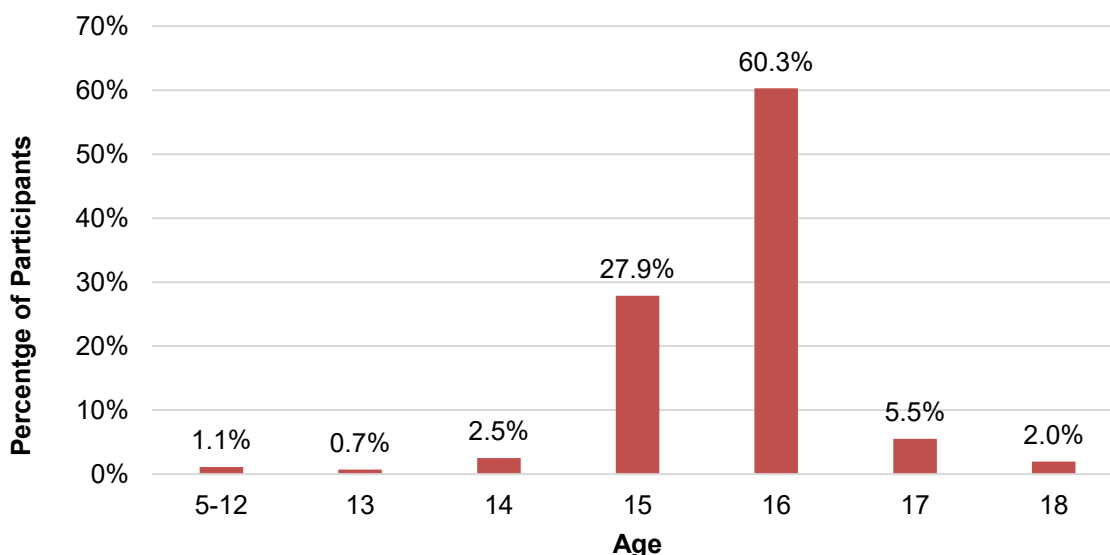
**Table 5.3: Status at enrolment by provider**

Status	GLLM training	ACT	Pembs College	Itec	Coleg Cambria
Short-term unemployed	46.0%	56.0%	81.4%	37.7%	70.8%
Long-term unemployed	54.0%	43.9%	18.6%	62.3%	29.2%

Source: Contractor MI data

5.15 The age at which participants left school was also captured by Contractors and illustrates that one third of participants had left school at age 15 or earlier, with four per cent having left school by the age of 14. Collectively, these data show that around half of participants have been out of education for a considerable period of time.

**Figure 5.3: Age at which JGW+ participants left school – April 2022–October 2023**



Source: Contractor MI data (N=8,857)

## Geographical location

5.16 The number of learner programmes started during the 2022–23 financial year by region is presented in Table 5.4 below.

**Table 5.4: Number of enrolments by region – April 2022–March 2023**

Region of domicile	Enrolments (learner programmes)		Target proportion <sup>35</sup>	16–19 population
	N	%	%	%
North Wales	640	12%	12%	20%
South Central Wales	1,605	30%	38%	33%
South East Wales	1,325	25%	29%	17%
South West and Mid Wales	1,760	33%	25%	29%

Source: Programme-wide statistics, Welsh Government; Population data from 2021 Census

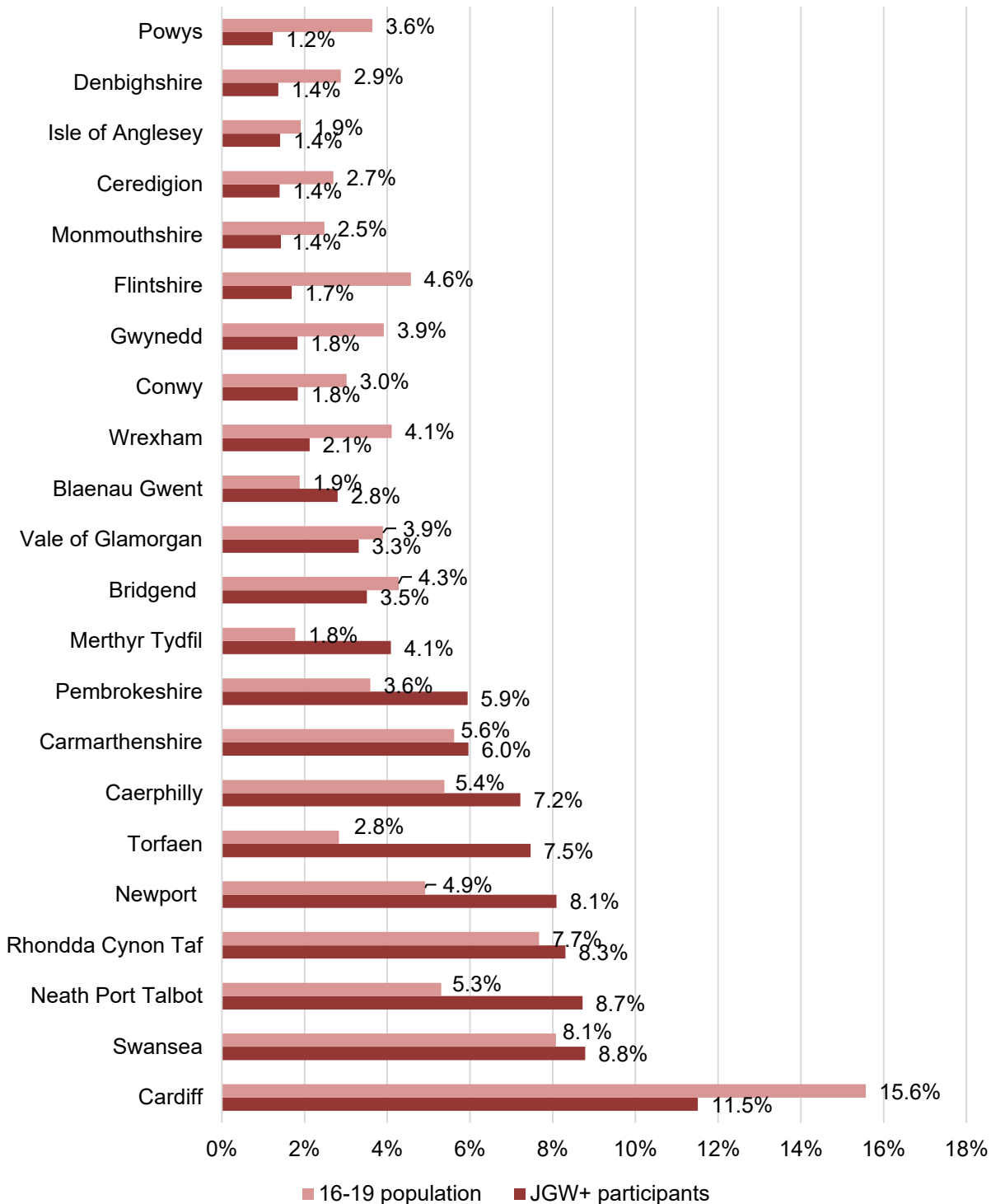
- 5.17 The geographical location of JGW+ participants by local authority based on Contractor MI is presented in Figure 5.4 below as a proportion of the total participants across Wales. The data are then compared to the proportional number of all young people aged 16–19 in Wales.
- 5.18 The analysis shows that young people in Cardiff account for the largest percentage share of all JGW+ participants, accounting for 11.5 per cent. However, when compared with the share of the Welsh 16–19 population, those of that age from Cardiff, Flintshire, Powys, Gwynedd, and Wrexham are underrepresented (compared to their share of the 16–19 age group) amongst those engaged by JGW+. Conversely, Torfaen, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Pembrokeshire, and Merthyr Tydfil residents are overrepresented amongst all JGW+ participants in comparison to their share of the 16–19 population. The overrepresentation of those residing in Torfaen is particularly pronounced, with 16–19-year-olds residing there constituting 7.5 per cent of JGW+ programme participants yet constituting only 2.8 per cent of the total population of 16–19-year-olds in Wales. Conversely, those residing in Powys constitute 1.2 per cent of the JGW+ participants, yet the total

<sup>35</sup> From JGW+ Programme Specification Document Section A9.



population amongst 16–19-year-olds represents 3.6 per cent of that age cohort throughout Wales. When the proportional breakdowns are compared it is estimated that a 16–19-year-old in Torfaen is just under eight times more likely to have enrolled in JGW+ than is one residing in Powys.

**Figure 5.4: Proportion of JGW+ participants and 16–19-year-olds by local authority – April 2022–October 2023**



Source: Contractor MI data

## **JGW+ support**

5.19 Amongst participants<sup>36</sup>, over the 2022/23 financial year, 3,195 participants enrolled in the engagement programme, representing 60 per cent of all starts. When more recent data are included (up to October 2023) that figure increases to two thirds (65 per cent) enrolled in the engagement strand of JGW+, whilst just over one third (34 per cent) are enrolled in the advancement strand. One per cent of participants were enrolled in the employment strand of the JGW+ programme (up to October 2023). The profile of strand enrolment by Contractor varied somewhat, with 57 per cent of those enrolled by ACT enrolled in the engagement strand in comparison to 78 per cent of those enrolled by Itec<sup>37</sup>. Those variations were reflected in the proportion enrolled in the advancement strand, with very little variation in the prevalence of participants enrolled in the employment strand of the programme by Contractor.

## **Learning activities**

- 5.20 Each participant can enrol in multiple learning activities, and an analysis of programme-wide Welsh Government statistics shows that on average in the 2022/23 financial year, each learner was enrolled in just over two activities. Participants withdraw or transfer from (rather than complete) around one in six activities (increasing to more than one in three for participants of GLLM provision).
- 5.21 Figure 5.5 below presents the type of activity undertaken by JGW+ participants based on the number of learning activities delivered during the 2022–23 financial year. Despite few participants enrolling in the employment strand of the programme, the data show job search activity to be the most commonly delivered learning provision, closely followed by learning activities that lead to a qualification and provision associated with an individual's personal health and well-being.
- 5.22 The Welsh Government statistical release for the period notes that of the 11,675 learning activities recorded in 2022–23, 3,195 (27 per cent) were associated with regulated qualifications listed in the [Qualifications in Wales](#) database. The top three qualifications were:
- City & Guilds Entry Level Introductory Award in Employability Skills (Entry 3)
  - ETCAL Level 1 Certificate of Introduction to Preparation for Military Service

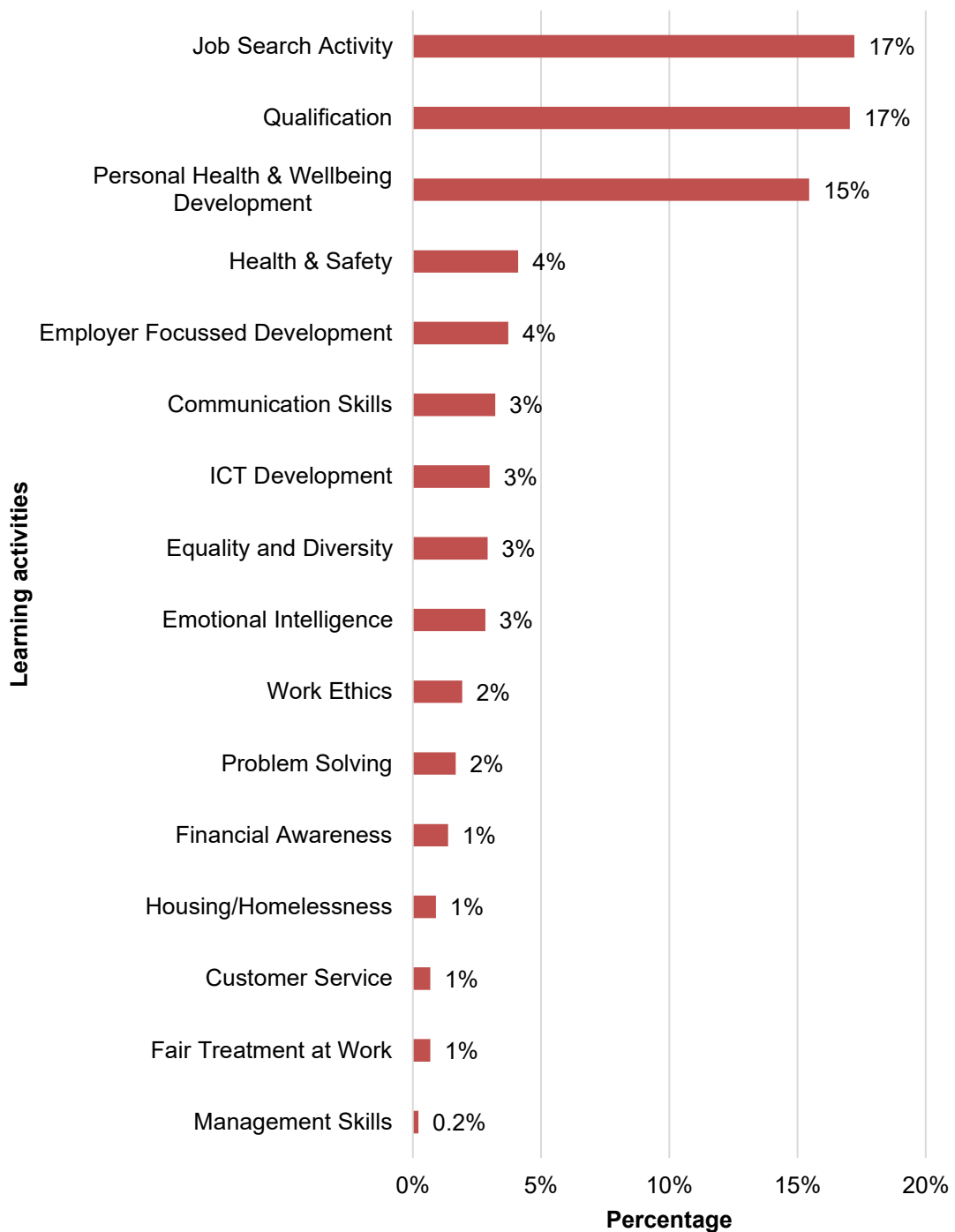
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<sup>36</sup> Excluding Coleg Cambria data.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

- City & Guilds Level 1 Award in Employability Skills<sup>38</sup>.

**Figure 5.5: JGW+ percentage of learning activities active by descriptor, 2022–23 financial year<sup>39</sup>**



Source: Welsh Government management information data; Base= 11,675

<sup>38</sup> [Jobs Growth Wales+ statistics: April 2022 to March 2023](#).

<sup>39</sup> It should be noted that for 23 per cent (2,685/11,675) of learning activities, no descriptor had been recorded.

## Welsh language provision

5.23 An analysis of the profile of participants earlier within this section identified that 18 per cent of participants were recorded as Welsh speakers, with eight per cent being fluent. Table 5.6 below shows that just over 11 per cent of learning activities incorporated Welsh language provision, whilst almost 15 per cent of activities associated with qualifications incorporated Welsh language provision.

**Table 5.5: Medium (language) of delivery of JGW+ learning activities**

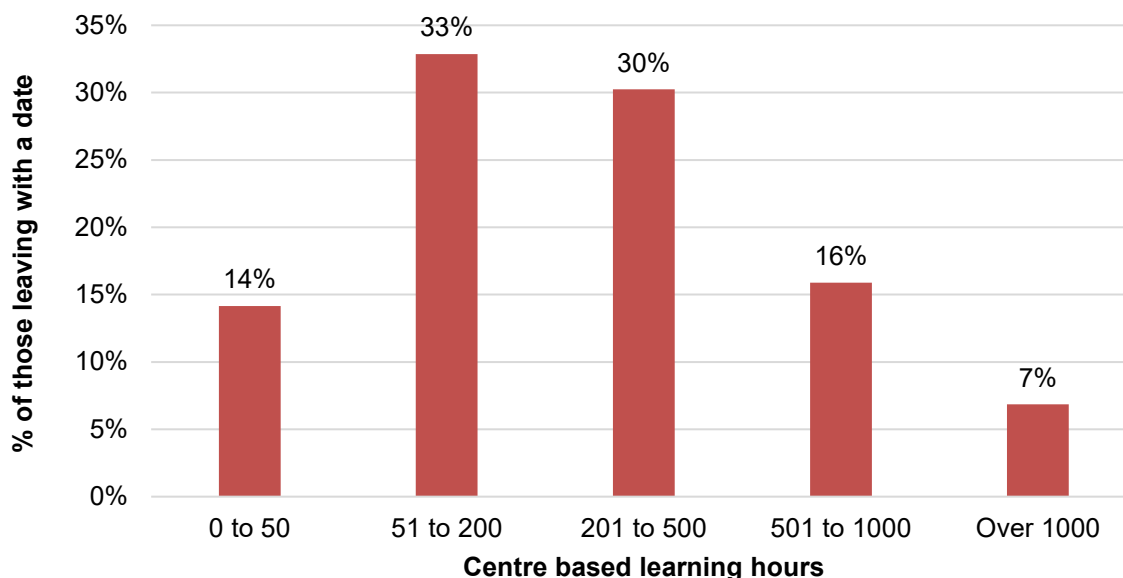
Medium of delivery	% of learning activities active during the financial year (2022–23)	% of qualifications active during the financial year (2022–23)
English only	88.8%	85.4%
Small amount of Welsh-medium learning	10.2%	13.1%
Significant amount of Welsh-medium learning	0.6%	0.9%
Bilingual	0.3%	0.5%
Welsh only	-	0.0%
<b>Total (n)</b>	11,675	3,195

Source: Welsh Government management information data

## Duration of support

5.24 The chart below provides some insight into the intensity of support that participants are receiving by analysing the number of centre-based learning hours per participant for their entire time in the programme since enrolment, through to October 2023. It only presents data for those who have completed the programme (those recorded with a leaving date within the Contractor MI, excluding those who enrolled in April 2022 and, therefore, likely transferred partway through their journey from the Traineeships Programme). The mean average number of centre-based learning hours of this cohort is 339 hours, whilst just under one quarter (23 per cent) received over 500 centre-based learning hours of support.

**Figure 5.6: Centre-based actual learning hours (total) for those participants with a termination date who enrolled between May 2022 and October 2023**



Source: Contractor MI data (N=4,543)

### **Rates of completion**

- 5.25 Each participant’s engagement in JGW+ is referred to as a learner programme where a participant enters a programme of learning and/or development. The phrase ‘programmes ended’ includes those who did not complete or conclude a planned series of activities, courses or experiences. The proportion who did not complete is calculated from the number of activities, courses or experiences ended minus the number of activities, courses or experiences completed. Thus, completion refers to those participants who finish/complete a series of planned courses or interventions to achieve a specific goal. These are individual to the need of the young person.
- 5.26 Completion rates (the proportion of activities, courses or experiences ended that are marked as completed) show marginal variation by region. Amongst those declaring a learning difficulty or disability, completion rates are slightly lower (59 per cent) than across all participants for the 2022–23 financial year (66 per cent) and specifically for those reporting a learning difficulty (57 per cent).

**Table 5.6: Rates of completion by characteristics**

<b>Activities, courses and experiences</b>				
<b>Category/characteristic</b>	<b>Started</b>	<b>Ended</b>	<b>Completed</b>	<b>Completion rate</b>
<b>Region of Wales</b>				
North	640	425	270	64%
South Central	1,605	960	630	66%
South East	1,325	715	465	65%
South West	1,760	1,115	765	69%
Unknown/outside Wales	5	[c]	[c]	-
<b>All</b>	<b>5,330</b>	<b>3,220</b>	<b>2,140</b>	<b>66%</b>
<b>Primary learning difficulty or disability</b>				
Disabled (affecting learning)	605	365	220	60%
LDD – type unknown	5	0	0	-
Learning difficulty	655	385	220	57%
Not applicable/not disabled	4,060	2,470	1,700	69%

Source: Welsh Government management information

### **Outcomes and destinations**

- 5.27 Outcomes and whether they are a positive, neutral or negative outcome are informed by the learner’s destination within four weeks of leaving the programme.
- 5.28 For learners in the engagement and advancement strands a positive outcome is either progression to learning at a higher level, progression to employment (full-time, part-time or self-employment) or progression to an apprenticeship. For learners in the employment strand a positive outcome is either progression to employment (full-time, part-time (16 or more hours per week) or self-employment), progression to learning at a higher level, or progression to an apprenticeship.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> See <https://www.gov.wales/jobs-growth-wales-statistics-april-2022-march-2023-html#125840> for further details.

- 5.29 For disabled learners, employment of less than 16 hours per week is also classed as a positive outcome.
- 5.30 Seeking work/unemployed and instances in which the destination within four weeks is not known are classed as negative outcomes.
- 5.31 Voluntary work, further learning at the same or a lower level, employment of less than 16 hours per week, and the 'other' destinations category are all classed as neutral outcomes. Learners with these outcomes are excluded from the denominator when calculating positive outcome rates<sup>41</sup>. All Contractors are targeted with securing positive destination outcomes for at least 60 per cent of participants (and 75 per cent of participants enrolled in the employment strand of the programme).
- 5.32 Results in Jobs Growth Wales+ statistics (April 2022 to March 2023) show that a total of 3,220 JGW+ programmes ended during the 2022–23 financial year, of which 2,140 were completed (66 per cent). Of the programmes that ended, 58 per cent of leavers had a positive outcome based on their destination within four weeks of leaving the programme, which is marginally short of the target.
- 5.33 When examining MI provided by Contractors for the same period, the evaluation identified 3,596 JGW+ programmes that had ended also with a positive outcome rate of 58 per cent<sup>42</sup>. Table 5.7 below compares outcome patterns for different groups as published in the statistical release with data available from Contractor MI for the same period. The Contractor MI contains additional fields which were tested to examine trends and a comparison of groups.

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> The variation in MI data and published JGW+ statistics likely relates to the fact that published statistics are derived from monthly 'freezes' of MI data, whereas 'live' MI data are likely to have been captured at a slightly different point in time. With the constant updating and adding of records the two time points of data capture and analysis will ultimately generate different results.

- 5.34 Statistical significance testing was performed on the Contractor MI. Chi-squared tests were used to compare the characteristic distributions of participants with positive outcomes (observed outcomes) and the overall distribution of participants (expected outcomes). This analysis found that for some characteristics (age, Welsh-speaking capability, highest qualification, and NEET duration) the characteristic distribution between the respondents with positive outcomes and the overall population of respondents was significantly different. A logistic regression model was also generated to determine the relationship between key characteristics and the likelihood of having a positive outcome. Odds ratios were calculated to quantify the size of an effect in comparison to a baseline characteristic.
- 5.35 For each characteristic below where a statistically significant effect was observed, the largest sample has been highlighted in bold and used as the baseline characteristic for the logistic regression. The odds ratio values indicate the relative likelihood of observing a positive outcome in comparison to the category in bold. Please note that unknown or missing responses were excluded from statistical testing.
- 5.36 In both datasets, similar rates of positive outcomes were achieved for those enrolled in the engagement and advancement strands, whilst a higher percentage of those enrolled in the employment strand secured a positive destination.
- 5.37 When analysing the rate of positive outcomes amongst disabled participants the statistical release suggests that they were marginally less likely to secure a positive outcome than the all-participant average (58 per cent). This was also lower for those with ADHD (40 per cent of the 100 participants who had ended the programme) and those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (47 per cent of the 12 participants who had ended the programme), securing the lowest positive progression rate.<sup>43</sup>
- 5.38 Both datasets show that across the 2022–23 financial year the percentages of males and females securing positive outcomes were relatively similar and no statistically significant difference was observed.

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<sup>43</sup> JGW+ learners by primary learning disability – April 2022–March 2023 data.



- 5.39 Data provided by Contractors do indicate that the earlier an individual is engaged in the programme, the more likely they are to secure a positive outcome, with 70 per cent of those aged 15 securing positive outcomes.
- 5.40 Contractor MI also shows that those with some Welsh language capabilities were more likely to secure a positive outcome and that those with higher pre-existing qualifications were also more likely to do so.
- 5.41 The duration for which a young person has been NEET appears to have an influence on securing a positive outcome. Finally, learners who took part in the programme with Pembrokeshire College were much more likely to achieve a positive outcome than were participants who were working with other Contractors.

**Table 5.7: Positive outcomes – April 2022–March 2023<sup>44</sup>**

Category/characteristic	% that secured a positive outcome – April 2022–March 2023 statistical release <sup>45</sup>	% that secured a positive outcome – April 2022–March 2023 Contractor MI <sup>46</sup>	Contractor MI (n)
<b>Strand<sup>47</sup></b>			
Engagement strand	57%	57%	2,111
Advancement	59%	59%	1,168
Employment	76%	70%	37
<b>Gender (≠)</b>			
Male	59%	59%	1,768
Female	57%	57%	1,517
Other	-	64%	14
<b>Age at enrolment</b>			
15	-	70%(*)	99
16	-	57%	1,264
17	-	56%	1,179
18	-	62%	586
19	-	61%	187
<b>Ethnicity</b>			
White	58%	58%	3,062
Black	61%	56%	42
Asian	55%	46%	38
Mixed	55%	50%	50
Other	43%	44%	57

<sup>44</sup> The symbols in brackets in the table denote statistical significance as follows: ≠ = no statistically significant relationship identified, \* = statistically significant to <5% to >1%, \*\* = significant to <1% to >0.1%, \*\*\* = significant to <0.1%.

<sup>45</sup> Excluding neutral outcomes.

<sup>46</sup> Excluding neutral outcomes.

<sup>47</sup> No statistical testing has been undertaken by strand, as there is an expectation that the prevalence of positive outcomes for these cohorts would vary.

Category/characteristic	% that secured a positive outcome – April 2022– March 2023 statistical release <sup>48</sup>	% that secured a positive outcome – April 2022– March 2023 Contractor MI <sup>49</sup>	Contractor MI (n)
<b>By Welsh-speaking capability (***)</b>			
Fluent Welsh speaker	-	59%(*)	264
Welsh speaker (not fluent)	-	69%(***)	299
Not Welsh speaker	-	57%	2,753
<b>By highest qualification (***)</b>			
Pre-Entry Level	-	53%(***)	936
Entry Level	-	54%	173
Level 1	-	55%(***)	850
Level 2	-	64%	1,331
Level 3	-	67%	24
<b>Disability</b>			
Learners with a disability and/or learning difficulty	-	53%	
Learners without a disability and/or learning difficulty	-	60%	
<b>NEET duration (***)</b>			
Less than 6 months	-	58%	1,027
6 months or more	-	50%(***)	803
<b>Primary carer (≠)</b>			
Primary carer	-	58%	128
<b>No caring responsibility</b>	-	58%	3,161
<b>Migrant Worker (≠)</b>			
Migrant worker/refugee	-	61%	21
Not a migrant worker/refugee	-	58%	3,169

<sup>48</sup> Excluding neutral outcomes.

<sup>49</sup> Excluding neutral outcomes.

Category/characteristic	% that secured a positive outcome – April 2022–March 2023 statistical release <sup>50</sup>	% that secured a positive outcome – April 2022–March 2023 Contractor MI <sup>51</sup>	Contractor MI (n)
<b>Contractor (***)</b>			
Pembrokeshire College	-	79% (***)	379
ITEC	-	59%	836
GLLM	-	42% (***)	190
ACT	-	55%	1,911
Coleg Cambria	N/A	N/A	N/A

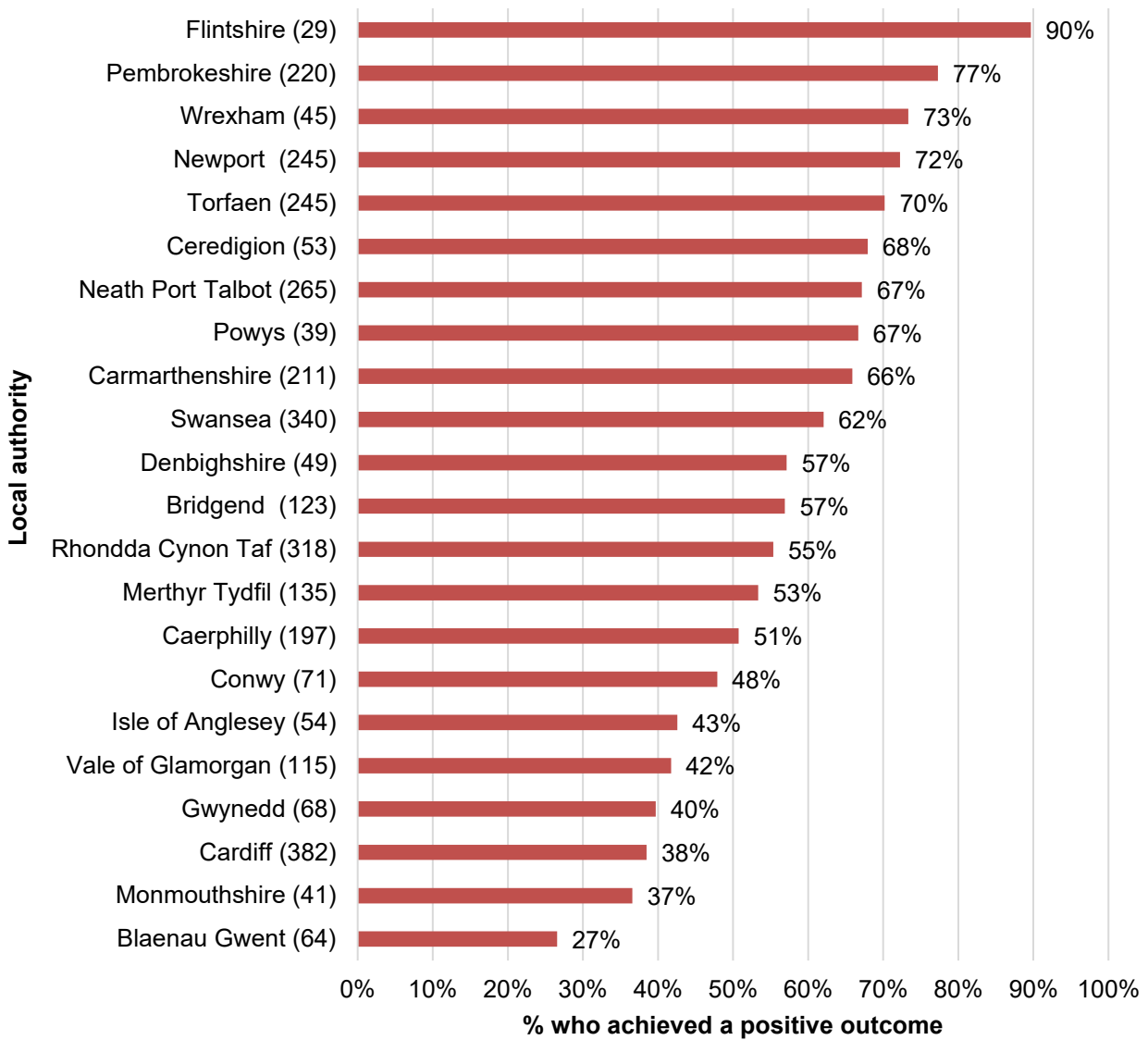
Source: Welsh Government official statistics from Jobs Growth Wales+ statistics: April 2022 to March 2023, Contractor MI

<sup>50</sup> Excluding neutral outcomes.

<sup>51</sup> Excluding neutral outcomes.

5.42 Figure 5.7 below analyses the rate of positive outcomes amongst those completing the programme by geography. The chart shows large variation in success, with 90 per cent of those residing in Flintshire securing a positive outcome in comparison to 27 per cent of those in Blaenau Gwent.

**Figure 5.7: Proportion of participants completing the JGW+ programme that secured positive outcomes by local authority area – April 2022–March 2023**

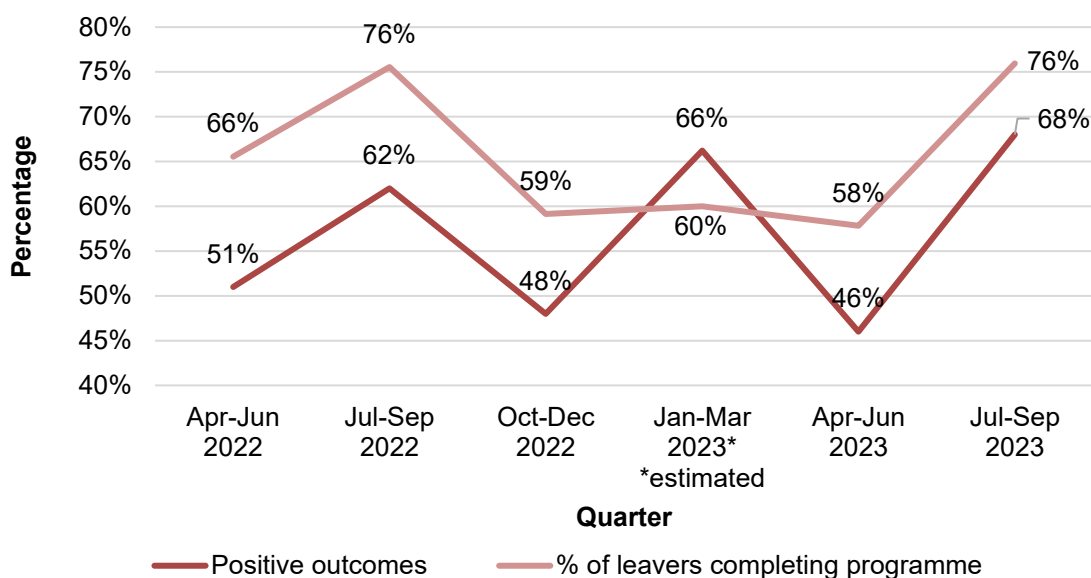


Source: Contractor management information

5.43 A subsequent analysis of performance data held by Contractors beyond March 2023, focusing on performance from April 2022 to October 2023, identifies a cross-programme increase in positive outcomes to 61 per cent (3,452/5,687) and this is further illustrated by an analysis of published performance data in Figure 5.8 below. The chart shows that whilst there was a reduction in positive outcomes in the April–June 2023 quarter to 46 per cent, in the July–September quarter, positive outcomes reached a new high of 68 per cent. Similarly, the proportion of participants ending their learning programme who had completed the programme reached 76 per cent, matching the performance over the same quarter in the previous year.

5.44 Collectively, the data suggest that there may be trends in programme performance data, with peaks in performance in the July–September quarter but troughs in performance in the preceding April–June quarter; however, additional data points are required before any trend can be substantiated.

**Figure 5.8: Analysis of published performance data by quarter – April 2022–September 2023<sup>52</sup>**



Source: Welsh Government [JGW+ Performance Data](#)

<sup>52</sup> January–March 2023 data are estimated because no quarterly releases have been published for that date range (an annual release was published instead). Estimations have been generated by subtracting the sum of the previous three quarters of data from the annual statistical release.

- 5.45 Table 5.8 overleaf provides an analysis of Contractor management information on positive outcomes using the approach set out in the published performance measures for JGW+<sup>53</sup>.
- 5.46 The table shows that whilst there is no disparity in positive outcomes between males and females, 52 per cent of those who identify as 'other' secured a positive outcome following completion of the programme, although it is important to note that the sample size is much smaller for this group, and the difference is not statistically significant.
- 5.47 The data also indicate that the earlier an individual is engaged in the programme, the more likely they are to secure a positive outcome, with 75 per cent of those aged 15, and 63 per cent of those aged 16, securing positive outcomes. The variation in positive outcomes by age is statistically significant.
- 5.48 The more recent data on positive outcomes by ethnicity present a mixed picture of performance, with 68 per cent of those who identified as being of Black ethnic origin securing a positive outcome in comparison to 53 per cent of those who identified as being of an Asian ethnic origin. None of the variations in performance, however, are considered to be statistically significant.
- 5.49 Those with Welsh language capabilities were more likely to secure a positive outcome and those with higher pre-existing qualifications were also more likely to do so. This variation is statistically significant.
- 5.50 The duration for which a young person has been unemployed appeared to have a small (but not statistically significant) influence on the positive outcomes, and those identifying as a migrant worker or refugee were marginally less likely to secure a positive outcome than average.

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<sup>53</sup> Learners with neutral outcomes are excluded from the denominator when calculating positive outcome rates.

**Table 5.8: Positive outcomes – April 2022–October 2023<sup>54</sup>**

Category/characteristic	No. of learners where programme ended <sup>55</sup>	Proportion that secured a positive outcome <sup>56</sup>
<b>By strand</b>		
Engagement strand	3,818	62%
Advancement	1,818	58%
Employment	51	67%
<b>Gender (≠)</b>		
Male	3,014	61%
Female	2,626	61%
Other	25	52%
<b>By age at enrolment (***)</b>		
15	228	75%(***)
16	2,565	63%
17	1,758	57%(**)
18	892	60%
19	243	60%
<b>By ethnicity (≠)</b>		
White	5,213	61%
Black	92	68%
Asian	83	53%
Mixed	197	62%
Other	106	45%
Unknown/refused	86	71%
<b>By Welsh-speaking capability (***)</b>		
Fluent Welsh speaker	471	64%(*)
Welsh speaker (not fluent)	593	68%(***)
Not Welsh speaker	4,623	59%

<sup>54</sup> The symbols in brackets in the table denote statistical significance as follows: ≠ = no statistically significant relationship identified, \* = statistically significant to <5% to >1%, \*\* = significant to <1% to >0.1%, \*\*\* = significant to <0.1%.

<sup>55</sup> Including those who secured a neutral outcome.

<sup>56</sup> Excluding neutral outcomes.



Category/characteristic	No. of learners where programme ended <sup>57</sup>	Proportion that secured a positive outcome <sup>58</sup>
<b>By highest qualification (***)</b>		
Pre-Entry Level	1,814	59%(***)
Entry Level	284	59%(*)
Level 1	1,310	56%(***)
Level 2	2,206	65%
Level 3	70	64%
<b>NEET duration (≠)</b>		
Less than 6 months	2,960	63%
6 months or more	2,628	58%
<b>Primary carer (≠)</b>		
Primary carer	191	61%
No caring responsibility	5,460	61%
<b>Migrant worker (≠)</b>		
Migrant worker/refugee	47	57%
Not migrant worker/refugee	5,499	61%
<b>Contractor (***)</b>		
Pembrokeshire College	585	76%(***)
ITEC	1,600	63%
ACT	3,175	58%
GLLM	344	48%(***)
Coleg Cambria	N/A	N/A

Source: Contractor management information

<sup>57</sup> Including those who secured a neutral outcome.

<sup>58</sup> Excluding neutral outcomes.

## Section Summary

- Trends have emerged in relation to the monthly volume of participants enrolled in the JGW+ programme. July and October appear to present two spikes in enrolment numbers, with the spike in July 2023 particularly pronounced.
- Whilst the caseload of JGW+ participants remained relatively static during the first 15 months of the programme, numbers have increased since the spike in enrolment in July 2023.
- It is estimated that over a 12-month period, JGW+ is engaging with around one third of all NEET young people (aged 16–18) in Wales<sup>59</sup>.
- There is wide geographical variation in recruitment to JGW+ when compared with 16–19 populations across local authorities. It is estimated that a 16–19-year-old living in Torfaen is nine times more likely to be enrolled in the programme than is one living in Flintshire.
- Participation in JGW+ is dominated by those enrolled in the engagement strand, with the latest data suggesting that almost two thirds (65 per cent) enrolled in that strand, with 34 per cent in advancement and one per cent in employment.
- Within the April 2022–March 2023 financial year the programme fell just short of the target, securing a positive outcome rate of 58 per cent. An analysis of the latest quarter of published data (July–September 2023), however, shows the highest rate of positive outcomes (68 per cent) since the programme launch, exceeding the original target.
- Management information shows that those enrolled with Pembrokeshire College, at a younger age (specifically 15 years of age), Welsh speakers, and those with higher pre-existing qualifications (Level 2 or Level 3) are more likely to secure positive outcomes than the average for the eligible cohort.
- Geographical variation in recruitment is also seen in terms of positive outcomes, with those enrolled in Flintshire being twice as likely to secure a positive outcome than those enrolled in Gwynedd.

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<sup>59</sup> Excluding Coleg Cambria data.

## 6. Reflections on the Delivery Model

6.1 This chapter explores operational practice at each stage of JGW+, including referral, pre-engagement, assessment, and service delivery. We discuss the perspectives of each stakeholder group, identifying strengths, challenges, and potential areas for improvement.

### Promotion and engagement

6.2 JGW+ promotional campaigns aim to increase public and professional awareness of the programme. The majority of marketing materials were targeted at young people. One stakeholder mentioned an additional campaign that sought to encourage employer participation in the employment strand. Examples of approaches shared by stakeholders included leaflets, advertising on buses, and delivering in-person sessions in schools. Interview responses suggested that approaches to marketing had been successful so far, whilst brand testing undertaken by JGW+ campaign agency Golley Slater showed higher-than-average interaction and engagement levels with branding. Furthermore, Golley Slater received a silver award from the Chartered Institute of Public Relations for the campaign, recognising that its impact on raising awareness of the programme had increased over time<sup>60</sup>.

6.3 Some stakeholders suggested that Contractors should deliver more promotional sessions in schools to increase awareness of the programme. One felt that there was a need to remove the stigma associated with work-based learning schemes within schools amongst students as well as educational staff. Promotional activities in schools could improve perceptions of the programme and reduce any negative associations that might deter learners.

6.4 Word of mouth was seen to be a powerful factor in encouraging young people to participate in JGW+. Amongst learners, 50 per cent (74/149) of those surveyed found out about JGW+ through word of mouth. Meanwhile, 37 per cent were directed to JGW+ by an organisation, suggesting that other organisations play a key role in promoting the programme to young people. Other sources of information on the programme mentioned by less than five per cent of respondents included through school/college, social services, leaflets, or discovering the service online.

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<sup>60</sup> Notes from Welsh Government Communications Team.

- 6.5 The RAG perceived the marketing materials to be particularly inclusive in terms of diversity and felt that the materials provided a clear sense that the programme provided a way in which to gain skills and confidence. The consensus view of the group was that the videos and the website were the most engaging content, preferring that type of content to leaflets and Instagram stills.
- 6.6 Some suggestions were made by the RAG regarding improvements in promotional materials. It was felt that the long-term benefits of the programme could be more clearly articulated and that some of the text in video footage scrolled too quickly. Moreover, it was felt that more diverse channels of social media could be used, including YouTube Shorts and TikTok, as these were felt to be some of the most popular modes of media consumption amongst young people.

### **Referrals**

- 6.7 As outlined earlier in the report, JGW+ has two primary referral routes (which are discussed in this section): referrals via Working Wales and direct referral. The Working Wales referral pathway has been in operation since the beginning of JGW+, but stakeholders felt that the initial approach, which did not allow direct referral by participants, generated low referral numbers. As a result, the direct referral pathway was introduced. Staff believed that this change led to a marked increase in referrals. LA staff also reported seeing increases in referrals when Contractors had begun service provision in new areas, and as overall awareness of the programme increased over time.
- 6.8 The role of EPCs in referrals varied geographically and was largely dependent on individual relationships. One Contractor identified that they had not received any EPC referrals, and suggested that this was because EPCs work with people who are particularly 'hard to reach' and, therefore, are less likely to engage in JGW+.
- 6.9 Some stakeholders noted that those referred to the programme via Working Wales benefit from receiving impartial advice and guidance to ensure that they can make an informed decision as to which service to access. An additional benefit of young people receiving impartial advice on services from Contractor staff is that it can help to recruit the 'hardest to reach' young people who can be reticent towards engaging with staff whom they see as being school representatives (including those from Working Wales and other Careers Wales staff) and, thus, may avoid the programme because it is seen to be linked to the school that they have not been attending. No

stakeholders suggested that any Contractors had accepted inappropriate direct referrals, but the inclusion of a separate advisor, viewed by young people as being 'independent' of the schools at which they were students, was seen by all stakeholders to increase transparency, promote the best interests of young people by encouraging them to freely share their circumstance, and reduce the occasions on which referrals have placed young people in the wrong JGW+ support strand.

- 6.10 Referrals via Working Wales also tend to give Contractors detailed information with which to help tailor their support, collected through the ARR assessment. Several stakeholders reported that learners were more likely to disclose information on their needs if they had completed the full ARR. This gave Contractors a better understanding of how to support each individual learner to succeed.

'I'd say through the Working Wales referral process they can delve deeper into their barriers and their life experiences or situations, their home life.' (LA stakeholder)

### **Direct referral**

- 6.11 The introduction of direct referrals was considered to be useful by the vast majority of JGW+ Contractors, primarily as it was felt that this greatly increased the number of young people accessing the service. Anecdotal evidence from WG stakeholder consultations suggested that direct referrals had also increased the number of learners accessing JGW+ from 'hard to reach' groups. Stakeholders felt that such direct referrals gave prospective participants a simpler, faster route into the programme, reducing the risk of early disengagement. Conversely, it was felt that the early lack of a direct referral pathway potentially created a barrier for prospective learners because they had to be redirected to Working Wales before accessing JGW+. No data are available on whether these people proceeded to access JGW+, but many stakeholders were concerned that young people would be deterred by the additional step. Allowing direct referrals (including those by EPCs) removed this barrier. Furthermore, it promotes young people's agency by recognising their capacity to select the right service for them without needing professional support.
- 6.12 There are, however, limitations with the direct referral pathway, including the relative lack of background information for both learners and Contractors. According to stakeholders, some directly referred learners lacked a strong understanding of

JGW+. Contractors also lacked background information on these learners due to incomplete information being collected through the needs assessment work that they undertook with direct referrals. These assessments, although based on the ARR document used by the Welsh Government, were not always applied completely in all cases. Consequently, the lack of information for Contractors and on participants sometimes made it challenging for Contractors to ensure that learners were suitably supported (and appropriately assigned to a respective strand) by Working Wales and Contractors, and for them to set achievable goals.

- 6.13 Stakeholders raised a few areas for possible improvement that could support effective JGW+ referrals via both pathways. Some suggested a need for schools to continue awareness raising, specifically to better communicate the benefits of work-based educational programmes to young people. Others felt that data sharing across all organisations and agencies was limited, and that increased information sharing could enable better tailoring of support by Contractors; however, the recent tightening of restrictions around the sharing of data with private organisations means that this will be difficult to overcome. Finally, one stakeholder explained that the referral process is complicated for young people who lack identification (birth certificates, passports, or national insurance numbers, for example) or other important documents, and queried whether some of these requirements could be diluted or even removed from the referral process.

### **Pre-engagement**

- 6.14 The enhancements of the JGW+ model in January 2023 included a specific emphasis on strengthening pre-engagement support, which has been made available to JGW+ participants between their initial referral and actual enrolment in a JGW+ strand. The level of support offered varies depending on young people's individual needs. They may receive tailored, one-to-one support and/or the opportunity to take part in Get Ready, the JGW+ enrichment activity programme that could be offered at any time of the year to provide extra support for those young people whose barriers are so strong that they would find it difficult to engage in a programme of learning in the engagement strand. It allows Contractors to work at a much slower pace to help introduce the participant to systems of working using a combination of enrichment activities and individual needs support.

## **Mental health focus**

6.15 The importance of pre-engagement activities was felt to relate primarily to mental health (particularly anxiety) and an associated lack of coping mechanisms amongst prospective participants of JGW+. These reportedly related to difficulties surrounding social interaction and other soft skills, much of which Contractors thought stemmed from the detrimental effects of COVID-19 lockdowns and the associated social restrictions on young people. Contractors described learners with no experience of day-to-day tasks such as reading an analogue clock or travelling via bus, while others presented with complex needs associated with poor mental health (e.g. homelessness or drug use).

6.16 Stakeholders emphasised the importance of responding to mental health needs of young people at all stages, including during the time before they join a JGW+ strand. Several had funded additional activities to support learners with their mental health.

‘We practise mindfulness, we have well-being sessions, we have sessions on respecting others, healthy relationships, coping and managing with stress, dealing with exam stress, juggling your time, time management. [...] And I think the last couple of years we’ve seen the least well-equipped young people for personal skills and those softer skills than we have in some time, so we’ve had to adapt that for our provision to make sure we’re meeting their needs and building those skills.’ (JGW+ Contractor)

6.17 Additional wraparound support and flexibility in participation are available to those who would otherwise struggle to take part. Contractors reported offering Transitional Support Workers who delivered 6–18 weeks of support before a young person’s entry assessment. At the beginning of this period, staff would work with young people on developing an action plan to help remove barriers, such as making internal referrals for mental health or anger management support.

6.18 Examples of wraparound support included organising an initial meeting for the young person with a staff member, supporting them to look through and understand the assessment questions before needing to answer them. This was thought to improve the assessment experience as well as levels of disclosure at the formal assessment. Some were able to have one or more pre-engagement appointments

with the JGW+ provider to find out more about the programme. Others were supported with the transition in practical ways to help them to feel more prepared, such as being introduced to staff, having a tour of the building, talking through transport links, or being shown where the nearest shops were so that they could buy food.

- 6.19 Offering flexibility in participation was a common way of supporting learners with mental health needs. This most often involved allowing attendance for fewer days per week. In some cases, learners were able to participate in a different way to meet their mental health needs, e.g. by completing work at home instead of in the classroom.

### **Get Ready**

- 6.20 The Get Ready component of JGW+ offers an enrichment activity programme that learners can attend before joining the engagement strand. Introduced in January 2023, it can be offered for up to 12 weeks depending on need at any time of the year. It has most commonly been offered as a summer holiday programme aiding programme engagement. Stakeholders were overwhelmingly positive about this additional support offer and viewed it as an effective ‘stepping stone’ towards the main JGW+ programme. The opportunity to take part in novel experiences, such as outdoor activities, has helped learners to grow in confidence, gain soft skills and broader skills for daily living, and has improved their mental health.

‘[Get Ready] has been good for some of the ones who have perhaps social anxiety and have been a bit more isolated, so we’ve seen that’s worked really well with some people who have either been isolating more because of [COVID-19] or the ones who elected for home education, rather than attending full-time school, because they’ve got less social interaction skills — they’ve got fewer friends.’ (LA stakeholder)

- 6.21 Providing enrichment activities was reported to have increased engagement and retention in the programme. The summer iteration of Get Ready was particularly beneficial in maintaining engagement with learners over school summer holidays. This offered routine and structure to young people who had recently finished education, and reduced the chances of their becoming more isolated.



- 6.22 The recognition that some young people might not be ready for the programme without receiving additional support beforehand also highlighted the need for JGW+ to dovetail with alternative services for young people. LA staff reported that EPCs oversaw the fulfilment of this need for the learners with whom they were engaged. This often involved delivering one-to-one support over several months to help prepare young people for an employability programme like JGW+.
- 6.23 As Get Ready is a more recent addition to the JGW+ offer, there are little data available on its success; however, the spike in engagement in JGW+ in the summer of 2023 suggests that the programme may have been quite widely deployed. It will be beneficial to interrogate monitoring data on the Get Ready component (if MI captures this evidence) in more detail in the subsequent phase of the evaluation (given the potential role that it has played). The majority of staff seemed keen for the delivery of this component to continue based on their anecdotal understanding of the value added.

### **Assessment process**

- 6.24 The approach to referral and assessment was generally consistent across Wales, and most stakeholders felt that the processes were working well. Contractors and LA stakeholders reported that waiting times between initial contact and assessment were minimal and reasonable (typically one to two weeks). One reason given for the short waiting times was that learners are well informed of any preparation or documentation that they need to bring to appointments. It was flagged that a backlog can develop if Contractors are at full capacity, e.g. when there is a sudden influx of learners over summer. This might be addressed by Contractors providing additional capacity at peak times, but there would, of course, be financial implications to adding extra resources. It was seen to be useful for learners to have a brief gap between initial contact and their assessment to give them time to prepare.

### **Assessment and Referral Report (ARR)**

- 6.25 In addition to its role in the referral process, the ARR provides a consistent approach to identifying barriers and needs of learners. This assessment helps professionals to determine the suitability of JGW+ strands for young people in comparison with alternative employability pathways. The same information feeds through into the development of ILPs with young people, which helps to shape the

support that they receive. Stakeholders felt that the ARR was a valuable tool for building a picture of learners and their support needs, allowing Contractors to tailor support to each individual.

6.26 While stakeholders were broadly positive about the ARR, they also highlighted areas for potential improvement. One issue faced by some Contractors was that of inaccurate or incomplete initial ARR assessments. The lack of data usually arose because young people were not comfortable nor able to disclose all relevant information during their initial assessment. In some cases it may take several sessions for staff to identify important information. Learners sometimes made later disclosures regarding their support needs once trust was built between them and a JGW+ staff member. Most staff were aware that learners disclosed additional information throughout their engagement and worked flexibly to meet arising needs.

6.27 In a few cases, Contractors felt that ARRs were completed inconsistently and lacked detail. Sometimes information seemed to be provided in separate documents without being fully reflected in the ARR. Furthermore, one LA staff member suggested that Contractors were not fully reviewing the information provided to them.

‘I’m talking assessment in the broader sense, not just their internal assessment that they do. But they had everything they could have wanted from the school in terms of the record for that young person and it wasn’t followed or taken on board.’ (LA stakeholder)

6.28 If a large amount of supplementary information is provided by assessors without being included in the core assessment, the inconsistency and the increased complication of interpreting referral information might increase the chances of JGW+ Contractors missing critical details. Any inconsistencies in assessment completion should be addressed to reduce the likelihood of this issue arising.

6.29 Legal restrictions on data sharing have been introduced which now limit Contractors’ understanding of learner needs. JGW+ Contractors are unable to access information, such as schools’ data, that might inform the assessment process, and Working Wales, who might obtain this information as part of the enrolment process, are no longer able to pass this information to Contractors. Limited access to relevant data creates greater challenges for referrals and for the assessment of needs.

### **JGW+ strand placement based on the ARR**

- 6.30 For young people who are referred to JGW+, the ARR informs in which strand of the programme they are placed. This initial decision, if made by Working Wales, is currently made using a computerised assessment tool. Direct referrals are made based on a staff member's professional judgement. Stakeholders generally thought that this approach worked well.
- 6.31 Occasionally the ARR process at Working Wales placed learners in a strand that was unsuitable for them. Several stakeholders mentioned issues created by the rigidity of the ARR-led method of placing learners in JGW+ strands. However, this is a mistaken understanding, and staff are able to 'override' the system based on their professional judgement.
- 6.32 A few stakeholders mentioned that mobility between strands was possible in these cases (e.g. via a 'triage system' which allowed for cross-referral between strands), but this did not seem to be used in all areas. Other Sub-Contractors believed that they were unable to change strand allocations without forcing a young person to 'drop out' and restart the assessment process. This posed a risk of deterring learners from rejoining the programme, whereas a simple internal referral system was viewed as a better option. Consequently, further guidance for Sub-Contractors is also needed to ensure that they understand that professional judgement can be used to revise strand allocations where needed to ensure that participants are supported in the way that is most relevant to their needs.
- 6.33 Suggested adjustments to the ARR were being fed into a Welsh Government Task and Finish group to make improvements regarding the time of the fieldwork for this phase of the evaluation.

### **Other assessment methods**

- 6.34 For direct referrals a version of the ARR has been developed which can also be used to fill gaps in initial assessments. These approaches had developed locally based on recommendations provided by the Welsh Government to ensure consistency. Data shared by LA staff, Pupil Referral Units, or additional internal assessments were used by different organisations to maximise information on incoming learners. Some adopted an informal approach to assessing well-being, and others a formal approach (e.g. the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)). The fact that several organisations have separately developed

additional assessment methods indicates a need for additional and more consistent information gathering.

### **Overarching reflections on service delivery**

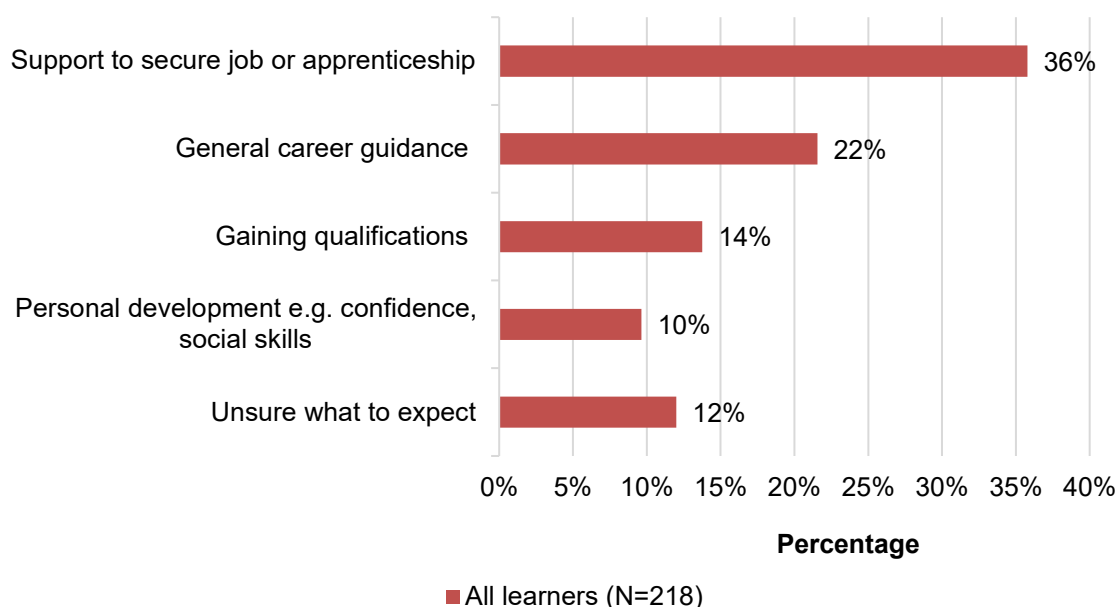
- 6.35 A key point raised by both learners and stakeholders was the need for well-trained staff with a diverse skillset. Nearly one in five learners (17 per cent, 26/149) highlighted that the understanding and supportiveness of staff created a positive and accommodating atmosphere. Learners were mostly positive about their experiences with staff, but some had noticed inconsistencies between team members. The positivity of feedback on Contractors varied regionally, suggesting that some local areas benefit from stronger Contractor staff teams more than do others. Only three per cent (3/93) of active participants thought that staff could have been more understanding or supportive, compared to 29 per cent (16/56) of 'early leavers'. This suggests that the staff approach plays a role in learner retention.

### **Initial support**

- 6.36 The vast majority of learners surveyed (93 per cent, 102/110) felt that there were no challenges in accessing JGW+ for the first time. The small amount who reported challenges mostly experienced transportation problems (three per cent, 3/110) or problems with online access, such as slow internet or limited data (two per cent, 2/110). It is worth noting that although a low number of enrolled learners reported these specific barriers, these may still be notable barriers to JGW+ participation for other young people who may face these barriers and, thus, not engage with the programme. Challenges such as the distance from provider locations or poor-quality internet might have prevented some young people from participating in the programme altogether.
- 6.37 Amongst learners (active participants and early leavers), 63 per cent (93/148) initially accessed the service in person, and 30 per cent remotely either via telephone (16 per cent, 24/148) or online (14 per cent, 20/148). Learners who lived farther away from the JGW+ Contractor offices, had childcare or caring commitments, were disabled, or were experiencing mental health difficulties may have found it difficult to have initial contact with JGW+ in person. The flexibility offered by JGW+ with regard to the initial contact method is therefore a useful aspect of flexibility in service provision which increases accessibility, supporting the engagement of 'hard to reach' groups.

6.38 Most learners surveyed seemed to have a realistic idea of what to expect from JGW+ when they first engaged with the programme, with most responses relating to employment and skill development, career guidance, personal development, or transitional support from school to the workforce. Figure 6.1 shows the most common expectations held by learners. However, 12 per cent (27/218) of all learners surveyed were unclear as to what they could expect from the programme. Contractors suggested that referring organisations should provide a better explanation to learners at the referral and assessment stage.

**Figure 6.1: Most common expectations of JGW+ held by learners**



Source: JGW+ Learner Survey

6.39 Active participants were largely satisfied with the initial support that they received, rating it as 4.2/5 on average. Nearly half (46 per cent, 43/93) had talked about their personal goals and career aspirations in the initial sessions, and almost one fifth (17 per cent, 16/93) said that early meetings were tailored to their individual needs or interests. Meanwhile, 31 per cent sought practical assistance at this point to develop job application skills such as CV-writing and interview techniques.

6.40 Amongst all learners, seven per cent (10/148) said that they received information on the well-being support available to them at this stage, though it is likely that many direct referrals had received this information during their assessment or pre-engagement phase, as the ARR or other assessment processes had been supported by guidance from the Welsh Government on their coverage.

### **Financial support**

6.41 In terms of financial support, 94 per cent (136/145) of active participants and early leavers recalled receiving the training allowance. Many learners surveyed noted the importance of this support, as it allowed them to access work or educational opportunities while paying for essentials. This money was most often spent on food, travel expenses, a uniform, or work clothing/equipment. Amongst active participants, 82 per cent (62/76) said that it had at least partly reduced financial pressure on them. Stakeholders reported that where young people were living with parents or guardians who were struggling for money, the allowance enabled young unemployed people to support household costs. Furthermore, 26 per cent (20/76) of active participants explained that they liked the small amount of financial freedom that it gave them, suggesting that it may also have played a role in their steps towards independent living away from the family home. Stakeholders believed that placing value on young people's time and efforts in this way helped to boost their self-esteem.

6.42 The training allowance appeared to play an important role in increasing young people's interest and engagement in the programme. Amongst learners, 76 per cent (98/129) said that the allowance influenced their decision to engage with JGW+ to at least some extent, and 25 per cent (32/129) said that it completely influenced this decision. Moreover, stakeholders explained that the increase in allowance had improved uptake and retention overall and that it meant that learners were under less pressure to rush too quickly through to employment for financial reasons.

6.43 A small number of stakeholders, however, expressed concerns regarding the training allowance's potential unintended impacts. One LA staff member expressed concerns that learners might feel forced to make early career decisions based on financial pressures at home.

'I really worry that our poorest families no longer have freedom of choice — they have to follow the money, not follow their dreams anymore. You know, I really struggle with that. If a young person is capable of doing A Levels at college but they can't afford to take the 40 pounds Education Maintenance Allowance, they have to go do JGW+ to take the 60 pounds.' (LA stakeholder)

- 6.44 While this is not a criticism of JGW+ itself, this comment points towards the need for all career development pathways across Wales to be strategically aligned, with learners from poorer families being offered equal access to and incentives towards all education, training and employment options.
- 6.45 A second challenge mentioned by a few participants was the fact that financial motivation does not equate to meaningful engagement and active participation in the programme. One learner believed that around half of the learners on their training course only turned up in order to receive their training allowance, and were disruptive in class, making it difficult for others to concentrate and succeed. It is vital to recognise that there are many more complex reasons as to why individual learners may appear disruptive in class. However, this reflection does raise a broader point on learner perceptions of the benefits of participation.

### **Inclusivity**

- 6.46 JGW+ is intended to be inclusive for all eligible young people living in Wales. While it is recognised that the programme is not necessarily suitable for every individual, it should be as inclusive and accessible as possible. All Contractors are expected to appoint a Welsh language lead as well as a lead for work with marginalised groups, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, LGBTQI+ communities, D/deaf people and the hard of hearing, and disabled people. Contractors are expected to incorporate learner voice into local service design and model development.

'The top and bottom of this is the young people — they are at the heart of the programme.' (WG stakeholder)

- 6.47 Despite this emphasis on learner voice, Contractors indicated very little knowledge of (or at least a few examples of) engagement with learner perspectives in inclusive model development. One reported consulting Welsh language speakers on service provision and planning to run a survey to enhance this aspect of service delivery in

future. Two mentioned learner voice groups for disabled people but gave no details of their engagement or consultation.

- 6.48 The learner survey asked completers and active participants an open question on their perceptions of programme inclusion and accessibility. Almost nine in 10 (88 per cent, 140/160) felt that the programme was satisfactory or better in terms of inclusion and accessibility. Positive comments related to the individualised nature of support and the positive learning atmosphere. Where respondents were less satisfied they mentioned feeling unwelcome or dismissed, or the limited physical accessibility of buildings.

### **Welsh language**

- 6.49 A key aim of JGW+ is to promote the Welsh language and increase the number of Welsh speakers, supporting Cymraeg 2050. As part of contracting procedures, all Contractors must evidence that they have some level of Welsh provision in place. Overall, however, stakeholders reported little demand for Welsh language provision from learners. This was reflected in the very small number of survey respondents who chose to access the service in Welsh. Out of the 25 respondents (of 149 who were asked) who identified as Welsh speakers amongst active learners and early leavers, only four had decided to access the service in Welsh. Amongst these four, three accessed the service online, whilst one opted for phone access. Management information in section 5 illustrates that around 11 per cent of learning activities included some form of Welsh-medium learning.
- 6.50 It seems that Contractors differ in their approach to promoting the Welsh language. One Contractor conveyed a particularly strong emphasis on promoting the Welsh language, including creating Duolingo leaderboards for classes.

‘We utilise [...] lots of different resources to make sure that we’re not only giving them interesting Welsh activities to be doing, but also challenging them and stretching them at the level that they’re at.’  
(JGW+ Contractor)



6.51 Other barriers to promoting the Welsh language related to resourcing. Two Contractors explained that they had struggled to recruit Welsh-speaking tutors. In addition, it was noted that providing a bilingual service can incur extra resourcing costs, which initially impacted some Contractors more than it did others. To address this issue, the WG have since added extra funding to support service delivery in Welsh.

### **Equalities analysis**

6.52 JGW+ is intended to incorporate an intersectional approach to service delivery. Intersectionality describes how personal characteristics such as ethnicity, social class, and gender intersect with one another and overlap, creating particular experiences of discrimination and/or privilege. In frontline practice, an intersectional approach must adopt this way of thinking in individualised practice. Furthermore, it must ensure that approaches to the engagement and support of minority groups recognise and actively address the societal barriers faced by these groups.

6.53 While there was evidence that staff sought to engage certain marginalised groups, there was no clear indication of an intersectional approach to practice. A Welsh Government stakeholder explained that anti-racism training was available to Contractors via the Renew and Reform programme, but it may also be worth delivering more detailed training on intersectional practice as well as broader accessibility/inclusivity issues to all Contractors.

### **Areas for improvement**

6.54 There was a general perception amongst stakeholders that the programme is inclusive because it is universal and because all referrals are accepted.

‘Well, I think it’s pretty inclusive because I haven’t come across any issues from young people or any of the support agencies involved with this cohort. All of the young people are treated as equal, really.’ (LA stakeholder)

- 6.55 Many stakeholders shared similar sentiments to those in the quote above. However, this perspective does not reflect the realities of inclusive service delivery. Despite highlighting some good practice examples (see paragraph 6.61), interview responses highlighted that very few stakeholders recognised that, rather than treating all learners as equal, JGW+ services should adopt an equity-led approach in which learners are supported in a way that addresses specific barriers to their participation.
- 6.56 The following quote from the [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan](#) (ARWAP) conveys this point in relation to Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups.
- ‘Frequently, the assumption is made that ‘providing the same for everyone’ will be the most appropriate service. Whereas in fact, taking people’s differences (e.g. language, dietary needs, dress, etc.) leads to a more sensitive, accessible and effective service. Often the consequence of the colour-blind approach is that ethnic minority people struggle to enter jobs, or to progress, or to receive services appropriate to their needs.’ (ARWAP)
- 6.57 Services need to expressly advertise programmes to ‘seldom-heard’ communities (rather than simply as ‘available to everyone’). The latter approach can lead minority groups to perceive services to be overly generic or ‘mainstream’, meaning that their individual needs will not be accommodated by the service. According to the bidding process, every Contractor will have strategies in place to engage marginalised communities.
- 6.58 Additionally, a lack of negative feedback from marginalised communities does not mean that a service is inclusive or accessible. Active consultation with minority groups is required in order to fully understand how well a service is working and how it might be improved. Contractors should increase their inclusion of learner voice from these groups to enhance service delivery.

### **System inflexibility**

- 6.59 There is limited provision for people unable to attend certain training programmes in person. JGW+ could seek to understand how many people are unable to attend courses in person, and could consider delivering pan-Wales online training programmes, but it is important to note that online engagement of any cohort can be much more difficult than in-person classes. Such a service would need a careful design to minimise the challenges of online delivery.

## **Strengths**

- 6.60 Despite these areas for improvement, it was anecdotally reported that JGW+ seemed to be more inclusive and accessible to young people than did previous similar programmes in at least one local area.
- 6.61 Examples of good practice included making allowance for use of the prayer room at key times, and offering learners gender-specific support, where same-gender support was viewed by learners to be culturally important. A WG stakeholder also mentioned the recent '[Supported Employment Pilot](#)' specifically designed for disabled people, which they now intended to roll out on a larger scale via the Contractors' network. Other examples of inclusivity for physically disabled learners related to arranging transportation and ensuring that classrooms were at ground level where necessary for learners.
- 6.62 Support for LGBTQI+ communities appeared to be the most developed, with one Contractor engaging a local LGBTQ+ organisation to deliver bespoke support sessions to learners from these communities. Several Contractors also explained that they ask learners for their preferred name and pronouns in initial sessions, and one mentioned monitoring recruitment numbers for LGBTQI+ communities. Moreover, staff mentioned that their organisation participates in Pride Month each year.
- 6.63 Furthermore, the Welsh Government allows Contractors to submit financial claims for the provision of equipment or other types of support to help meet specific learner needs. Ninety-five per cent of the 21 active participants surveyed who self-identified as having accessibility needs or access requirements said that these needs and/or requirements were met by the service. This is a positive indication that services are meeting the majority of young people's accessibility needs.

## **Specific support strands**

- 6.64 In the absence of management information that sets out the strand of JGW+ in which a participant enrolled, introductory questions in the learner survey sought to ascertain a learner's strand of engagement. Based on those discussions, an estimated two thirds (69 per cent, 98/143) of learners surveyed were enrolled in the engagement strand. Just under one quarter (24 per cent, 34/143) were enrolled in the advancement strand, whilst eight per cent were enrolled in the employment strand.

## **Transition between strands**

- 6.65 The typical length of time spent in each strand varied greatly, with stakeholders indicating averages of anywhere between six weeks and 12 months. Most participants tended to receive at least a few months of support due to the extent or complexity of their needs. There was some suggestion that learners sometimes spent longer in the engagement strand because of the significant jump in expectations between engagement and advancement. The engagement strand was also sometimes recognised as placing high demands on learners. One stakeholder suggested that the transition between strands could be made 'gentler' to make it feel more manageable, e.g. by having a six-week transitional period (rather than an immediate switch).
- 6.66 Crucially, there was a notable lack of clarity as to personal progression in JGW+. Learners were not always sure what they should have been doing in order to progress, or about whether they were ready to complete a particular strand. Stakeholders explained that learners do not necessarily need to know in which strand they are situated. However, some learners whom we interviewed did not know whether they had completed the programme or left early. This may have been because these learners had less regular contact with JGW+ Contractors and, thus, were not fully up to date with their learning journey (as represented by their ILP). Contractors are required to ensure regular ILP meetings with learners, but reported that some young people missed these meetings and did not respond to Contractors' attempts to reach them.
- 6.67 A potential solution here is for Contractors to identify staff who could concentrate their work upon reaching these non-contactable/non-responsive learners to identify reasons for that initial disengagement and identify ways in which it could be rectified.

## **Engagement**

- 6.68 The perception of the engagement strand was overwhelmingly positive. Learners benefitted substantially from improvements in their mental health, confidence levels, soft skills, social skills, and life skills, in addition to employability. The individualised nature of this strand was noted as a particular strength, as staff had the greatest flexibility with which to deliver a service that more precisely met learner needs.

- 6.69 EPCs consulted were most familiar with the engagement strand, and often had limited knowledge of the other strands. They felt that the ability to deliver the engagement and advancement strands at a variable pace to suit individual learners was beneficial. This person-centred approach was seen to avoid ‘setting them up to fail’. On the other hand, a small number of stakeholders expressed concerns regarding the chance that learners might stay in the engagement strand for too long.
- 6.70 One Contractor has introduced their own ‘engagement+’ strand in recognition of the fact that learners are joining the programme at such different points, with vastly different levels of need. This approach appeared to also help to recognise the significant achievements that learners often make despite remaining in the engagement strand for many months.

### **Advancement**

- 6.71 Although the advancement strand saw fewer referrals than those of engagement, stakeholders broadly believed that the strand was working well. The addition of opportunities to complete Level 2 qualifications was seen to be a positive for learners, particularly because employers were thought to view certificated qualifications more positively than uncertificated or informal courses.
- 6.72 Several stakeholders, when reflecting on the advancement strand, spoke of upskilling learners for specific sectors. One stakeholder shared a specific example of success through liaising with short-staffed LA departments, where any learner who gained a fitness qualification was automatically given an interview with local LA leisure services, which had been experiencing difficulties in hiring to a full staff team. In addition, there was suggestion that courses and qualifications could be even more tailored to support young people’s careers by focusing on skills with which to meet future industry needs, such as technical skills for supporting the transition to Net Zero. It may be effective to promote qualifications with local and national skills gaps, not only to promote learners’ employability prospects, but also to help meet current industry needs.

### **Employment**

- 6.73 Most stakeholders found it difficult to comment on the employment strand, as so few learners had participated so far. They were not confident that they knew which aspects had worked well or what might be improved. Some noted a shortage of

interested employers, particularly during earlier stages of delivery. There was hope that a JGW+ marketing campaign delivered during 2023 would help to increase employer awareness and understanding of the strand, and soon allow Contractors to offer a wider range of job opportunities to learners.

- 6.74 The primary reason for the underuse of the employment strand, however, is that the vast majority of learners were not ready for this strand. Some suggested that the model needs to be reviewed and refined to increase numbers, while others thought that it was too early to say. It may be that learners begin to filter through from the other strands gradually as delivery continues and the programme becomes more embedded in local areas.
- 6.75 Learners appeared to be inconsistently supported by Contractors during work placements. While some felt able to receive support from staff whenever they needed it, others found it difficult to get in contact with Contractors while on placement. There was concern amongst stakeholders that the employment strand was not designed to include sufficient wraparound support to learners. Responses made it clear that there is a need for more consistent service provision during placements. Although these learners might be taking large steps towards independent employment, they should still be able to access high-quality support from Contractors throughout the employment strand if needed.

### **Satisfaction with support**

- 6.76 Almost all learners surveyed felt that they had benefitted from JGW+ participation in some way. Overall, feedback was overwhelmingly positive. All active participants surveyed said that the support was right for them (n=69). Even the majority of early leavers (85 per cent, 35/41) agreed that JGW+ support had been right for them. Of these 35, 13 (or 38 per cent) left for another training course or other education and eight (or 35 per cent) obtained a job or apprenticeship.
- 6.77 A key factor in learner satisfaction with support was staff considering individual needs and delivering a tailored service. Four out of five (81 per cent, 131/161) active participants and completers believed that JGW+ ensured that their personal needs were reflected in the kinds of support that they received from the programme. Anecdotal feedback also indicated that course content, staff-to-participant ratios, and the location of service provision impacted on learner levels of satisfaction.

- 6.78 Participants noted that in more remote geographies, they faced much longer travel times. One stakeholder suggested considering revisions to the funding structure to allow for more dispersed geographical coverage and improve accessibility for people in rural areas.
- 6.79 Around nine in 10 (89 per cent, 193/218) said that the support had met or exceeded their expectations. Those still participating in the programme gave various explanations as to why and how the support met their needs and expectations of participation. Some felt that the support had contributed to their career development, while others believed that communication and advice from staff were clear, or that staff created a supportive learning environment.
- 6.80 Nearly three quarters (72 per cent, 156/217) of learners surveyed felt that there was no way in which JGW+ could be improved. The most commonly suggested change, as recommended by six per cent of learners, was to provide more individualised support. Others suggested spending more time on educational and professional development support such as CV-writing and interviewing skills, and three per cent suggested increasing promotion and awareness of the programme.
- 6.81 LA stakeholders believed that the addition of JGW+ to the network of services had helped to fill gaps in local service provision, particularly in providing an alternative to ‘mainstream’ service provision. They also highlighted, however, the need for a more strategic approach to connecting JGW+ with other services to ensure that the programme connects with other available support options for young people.
- 6.82 A few other potential areas for service improvement were suggested by stakeholders. One was to add further follow-up support to maximise positive outcomes for learners who may not necessarily be ‘job-ready’ upon programme completion. This latter point could also be taken to highlight the need for JGW+ to link up with wider local services that may be able to provide follow-up support, e.g. the Jobcentre.

‘They just need to remember that once they’re in JGW it doesn’t mean that everything’s hunky-dory and perfect and they’ll be fine. They’re still going to need support and that’s the whole point of it — to just get them that step closer to work.’ (LA stakeholder)

## Section Summary

- Stakeholders felt that the marketing and promotion of JGW+ had largely been successful and that awareness of the programme had increased over time. There were suggestions that promotion within the school environment could be strengthened, and greater diversity of social media channels utilised.
- It was widely felt that the introduction of direct referral to the programme led to a marked increase in the rate of enrolments, with pre-engagement activity such as Get Ready being particularly effective in increased enrolment levels recorded in the MI.
- Referrals via Working Wales provided useful insight via the ARR for participant assessment. Direct referrals were a more straightforward route into the programme but relied more heavily on participants to self-report or EPCs to detail any additional needs or specific barriers that they may face.
- The importance of pre-engagement activities was felt to relate primarily to mental health (particularly anxiety) and an associated lack of coping mechanisms amongst prospective participants of JGW+. The pre-engagement provision was widely welcomed by stakeholders.
- Participants were widely positive about the JGW+ programme, finding it easily accessible and the staff understanding and supportive.
- Almost two thirds of learners initially accessed the service in person, with the remainder doing so remotely either via telephone or online, with participants primarily expecting to receive support to secure a job or apprenticeship.
- Amongst active participants, 82 per cent of learner respondents felt that the allowance at least partly eased their financial pressures. Furthermore, it played an important role in increasing young people's interest and engagement in the programme. Stakeholders believed that placing value on young people's time and efforts in this way helped to boost their self-esteem.
- There appeared to be little evidence of Contractors working with marginalised groups in the design of inclusive models of support. That said, almost nine in 10 learners felt that the programme was satisfactory or good in terms of inclusion and accessibility.



- Stakeholders reported a little demand for Welsh language provision from learners, whilst two Contractors struggled to recruit Welsh-speaking tutors, and extra resourcing costs were considered to be a barrier to Welsh language provision (additional resources have subsequently been provided by the WG for Welsh language provision).
- Despite some of the concerns surrounding the understanding of intersectionality and inclusivity and its application by Contractors in their delivery of the programme, JGW+ was still viewed as more inclusive and more accessible to young people than were previous programmes of a similar nature, with various specific support targeted at marginalised groups and the widening of referral approaches noted in section 4.
- The duration of support for participants varied greatly, particularly amongst those in the engagement strand; however, this flexibility- and needs-led approach to learner support was widely welcomed.
- For those enrolled in the advancement strand, stakeholders queried whether more sectoral targets of skill support could be considered to respond to future industry needs.
- Amongst participants, nine in 10 felt that the support had met or exceeded their expectations, whilst three quarters felt that there was no way in which the programme could be improved.
- Stakeholders viewed JGW+ as filling a gap in local service provision but that perhaps greater integration of other service support might be necessary to ensure that all support options are made available to young people.

## 7. Outcomes/Impacts of Support

7.1 This chapter describes the outcomes and impacts of the JGW+ programme, including those for learners and employers offering jobs or placements.

### **Perceptions of the benefits and impacts of support**

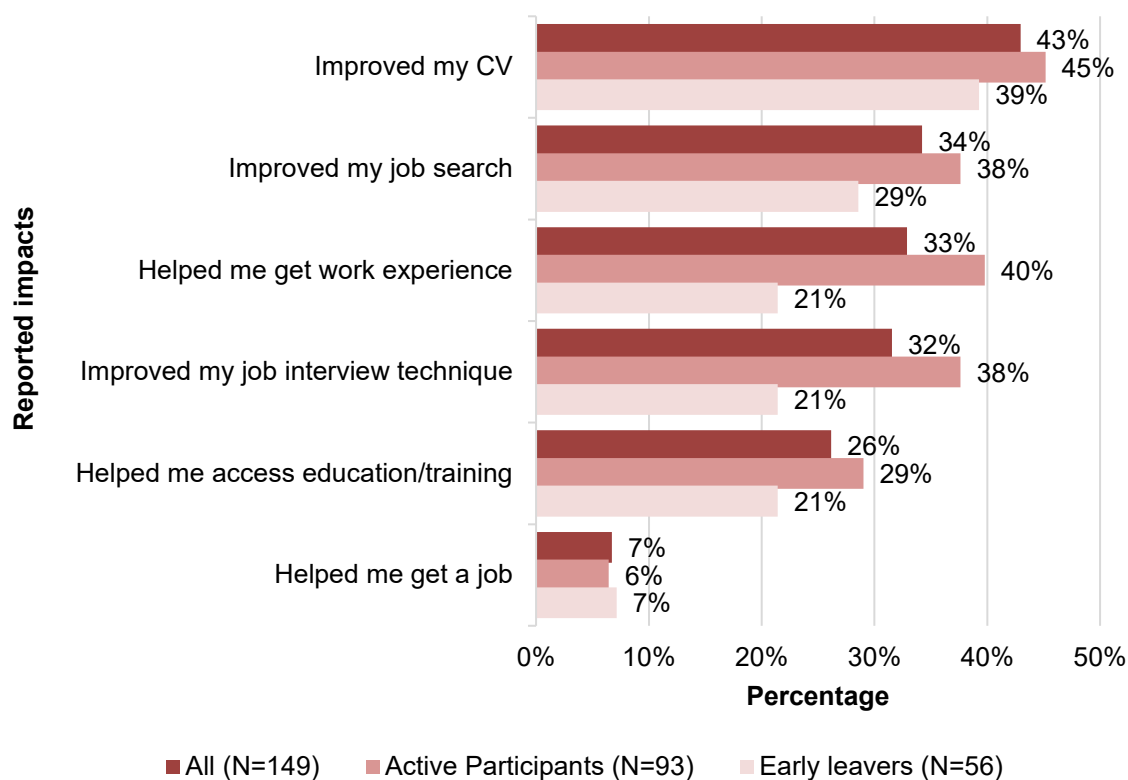
7.2 Learners reported wide-ranging benefits and positive outcomes as a direct result of JGW+ participation. Some explained that engaging in a structured programme was particularly useful. The two quotes below indicate the impact that the programme had for some learners.

‘I was kicked out of [two different educational institutions]. They’ve changed my life — I went there and they sorted my life out.’ (Learner)

‘It was amazing. The support I got for my mental health was really good. I’ve got ADHD. They supported me when I wasn’t able to go into [another service] too. They’d meet me in a cafe and they pushed me in the direction of Careers Wales. I got Agored qualifications, my CV and with confidence building, I did my barista course too. They gave me loads of opportunities and pushed me outside my comfort zone. There was always a room where I could talk to someone.’ (Learner)

7.3 Many learners felt that the programme had a positive impact on their job prospects, including those who left early. Figure 7.1 presents a comparison of active participants’ and early leavers’ reported impacts in this area. It is worth noting that although early leavers were less likely to experience these positive outcomes than were active participants, many still saw improvements in this area.

**Figure 7.1: Impacts of JGW+ participation on job prospects for active participants and early leavers**



Source: Learner survey

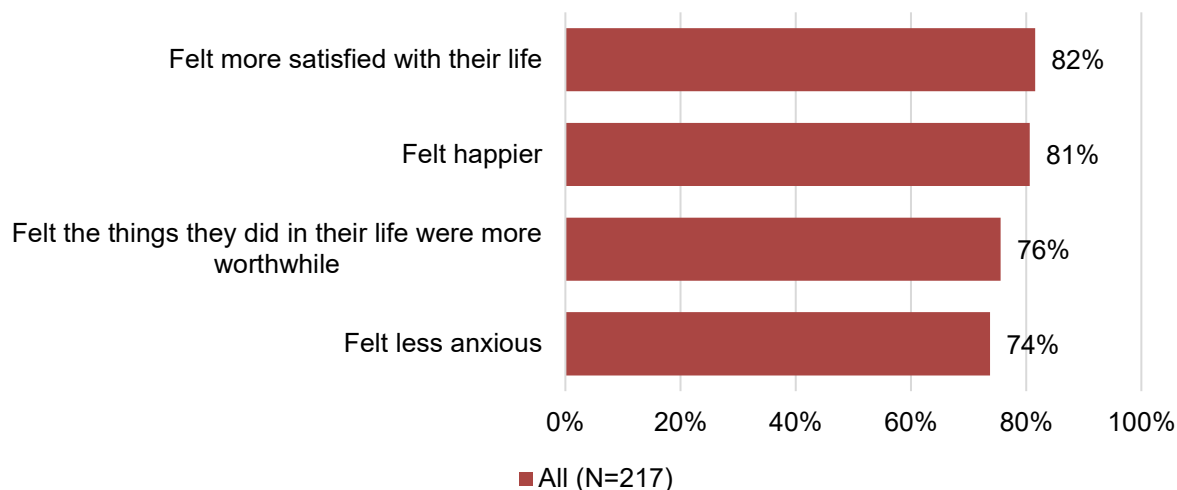
7.4 Active participants said that the support had also shaped their understanding of and approach to career development in multiple areas. The majority reported impacts on their understanding of the job or career path that they wanted to follow (83 per cent, 76/92), their knowledge and awareness of available training and employment options (74 per cent, 67/91), their motivation to consider employment and training opportunities (67 per cent, 62/92), and their overall approach to job hunting or work (67 per cent). Some additionally noted that the programme helped them to develop their communication and social skills.

‘They’ve gotten me in with CAMHS<sup>61</sup> and gave me help to find social skills and gave me lots of confidence and left with a voice. My training advisor was amazing. I was there for over a year, and I left early as I found work.’ (Learner)

<sup>61</sup> CAMHS stands for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and covers NHS services that assess and treat young people with emotional, behavioural, or mental health difficulties.

7.5 Many learners experienced positive impacts on their mental health or well-being. More than half (55 per cent, 82/149) of participants said that the programme had improved their confidence. When comparing how they felt now to before they took part in JGW+, most learners reported multiple positive changes in their well-being, as seen in Figure 7.2.

**Figure 7.2: Percentage of learners who responded to positive statements around changes in their mental health or well-being compared to before taking part in JGW+**



Source: Learner survey

7.6 Furthermore, 95 per cent of completers (54/59) thought that JGW+ had increased their chances of finding satisfying work, and 93 per cent (53/59) believed that participating in JGW+ had positively contributed to their likelihood of gaining permanent employment.

7.7 The majority of learners at least partially attributed outcomes to JGW+. Survey respondents were asked about whether JGW+ had given them new opportunities or experiences. Of the 110 who chose to answer this question, 76 per cent (84) did not think that they would have achieved or experienced the same things if they had not participated in the programme. This indicates that JGW+ support has directly contributed to generating positive outcomes and impacts for learners.

### **Destinations**

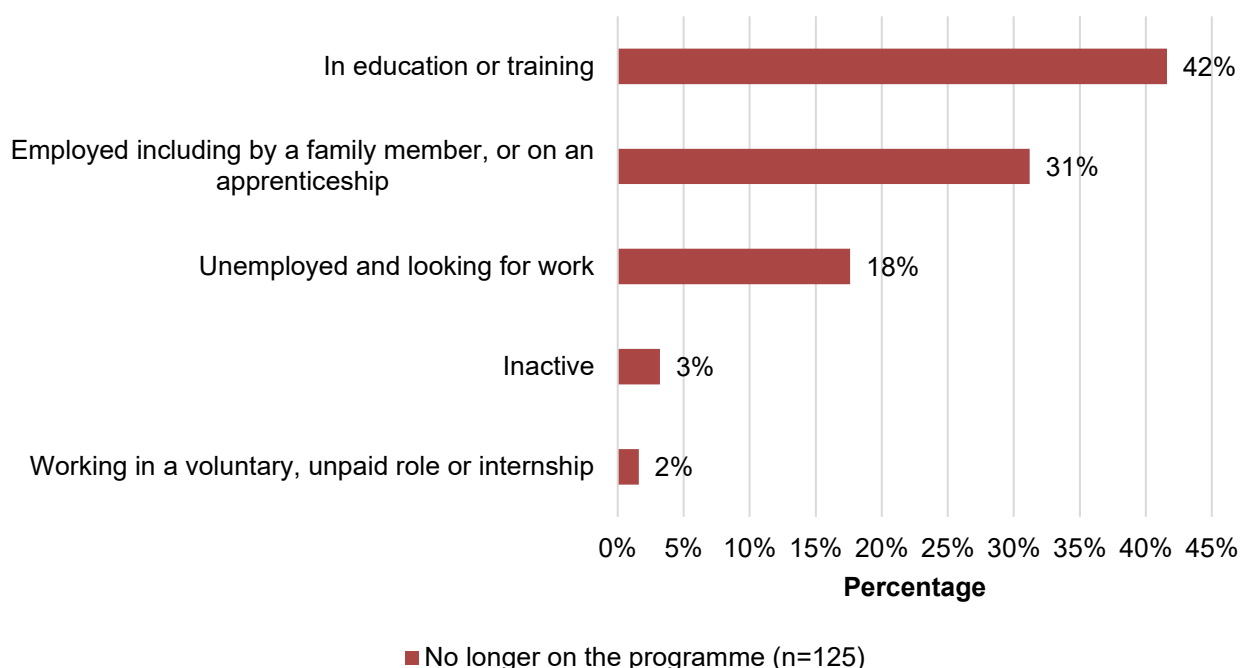
7.8 Contractors conveyed that JGW+ successfully brought learners closer to the labour market. Various stakeholder groups shared several examples of positive employment outcomes. Some learners were able to secure apprenticeships or employment contracts after participating in work placements.

- 7.9 Yet, staff also explained that many learners needed more time to gain employment. Stakeholders therefore sought to recognise different types of suitable short-term goals for them (given their varied support needs and ongoing barriers to work). In addition to these short-term outcomes, it would be useful to build an understanding of learner journeys and the long-term impacts of programme completion.
- 7.10 Around three in 10 (31 per cent, 39/125) learners surveyed who were no longer receiving support from the programme were in employment at the time that they answered our survey, and a further five completers had previously been in employment at some stage after finishing JGW+. Our survey included a question for currently employed completers with regard to their opportunities for progression. Of the 16 who answered this question, 10 said that there were progression opportunities in their role.
- 7.11 That 31 per cent of completers and early leavers (39/125) were employed at the point of being interviewed should not be understated, particularly given the level of support needs identified for the cohort<sup>62</sup>. It is, however, important to note that of the 18 completers who were in employment, less than half were on permanent or open-ended contracts (seven), and only four were working full-time. The median annual salary for this group was £7,800 and £10,656 for those working full-time (which is likely deflated because some of these participants will be undertaking apprenticeships).
- 7.12 After participating in JGW+, under half (42 per cent, 52/125) of participants surveyed were in education or training. Just under one third (31 per cent, 39/125) were employed or in an apprenticeship, 18 per cent were unemployed and looking for work, and two per cent were in a voluntary or unpaid role.

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<sup>62</sup> By way of comparison, there was a 37 per cent uplift amongst unemployed and inactive participants of the Youth Employment Initiative in comparison to the baseline six months after the programme intervention — [Youth Employment Initiative Evaluation](#) (2016–19). As for the Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus programmes, on Priority 3 (which aims to reduce the number of 16–24-year-olds who are NEET), 50 per cent of those engaged secured a job entry (May 2015–March 2023), [Evaluation of Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus – the performance and value for money of the programmes](#).

**Figure 7.3: Current status of individuals who were no longer receiving support from the programme**



Source: Learner survey

7.13 Over half (61 per cent, 35/57) of surveyed individuals who left before completing their JGW+ learning activities said that they left for positive reasons — 21 per cent to enter education, 21 per cent for employment, 12 per cent for an apprenticeship, four per cent for another training course, and four per cent for a work placement. The second most commonly reported reason for leaving early was for personal circumstances, e.g. ill health (19 per cent, 11/57). A total of nine per cent left because JGW+ support was not suitable for them or could not be sourced by the Contractor (e.g. where opportunities could not be identified in a specific industry). Three per cent were dismissed from the programme, and three per cent left for other reasons.

7.14 Anecdotal reports from stakeholders indicated that some learners left JGW+ because they struggled to balance the programme with their caring responsibilities. Unfortunately, cases were reported by stakeholders where participants felt compelled to leave before entering the employment strand due to fears that their family household might lose access to current benefits that they needed in order to pay for essentials.

- 7.15 There were a small number of anecdotal suggestions from stakeholders that participants who self-referred were more likely to leave the programme; ultimately, however, they felt that there was a lack of good monitoring data on the reasons as to why learners had left the programme. One Contractor suggested that more closely monitoring those seen to be at risk of disengaging, e.g. those with low attendance rates, would be useful in helping to provide a more responsive approach to addressing barriers to participation.
- 7.16 Three quarters (75 per cent, 43/56) of those who left JGW+ before completing their learning activities did not think that anything could have been done to help them to complete the programme.

### **Employer perspectives**

- 7.17 Learners participating in the advancement and employment strands are offered opportunities to take on work placements and to secure employment (with the first six months of that employment subsidised by JGW+). Fieldwork was undertaken with employers to collect more information on how this aspect of the programme functions.
- 7.18 Amongst the 24 employers who engaged in the evaluation, 13 respondents represented microbusinesses (0–9 employees), 10 small businesses (10–49 employees), and one medium-sized business (50–249 employees).
- 7.19 Of those employers, 17 had offered placements to learners, five had provided jobs, and two had offered both options. Nine employers had participated in one of the previous iterations of the JGW programme. The most common reasons given for participating in the programme were wanting to support young people (20/24), in order to meet recruitment needs/challenges (7/24), or for financial reasons (7/24).
- 7.20 WG stakeholders suggested that the cost-of-living crisis had impacted on businesses' ability to offer roles. Moreover, they expressed concerns that the recent national increase in remote working had made it more difficult to properly support learners. However, surveyed employers explained that the subsidy had enabled them to participate in the programme and provide a useful mechanism for (initially) subsidised employment. Some said that they would not have been able to take a staff member on otherwise.

- 7.21 Employers were asked about the support that they received from JGW+ Contractors during their participation in the programme. Twenty (of the 24) said that they were supported well with initial administrative tasks (such as shortlisting candidates and arranging DBS checks/training). Fewer employers, however, reported having received support from Contractors following the initial engagement, with three reporting ongoing opportunities for employer check-ins, and three mentioned JGW+ providing progress reviews for learners. That said, the vast majority (21/24) of employers felt that this support had met their needs. Some made suggestions for improvement, such as Contractors setting goals in collaboration with young people, improving onboarding processes to reduce delays, and improving communication.
- 7.22 With regard to their perception of the learners whom they had appointed to roles within their organisations, employers were largely positive. Fourteen of the 24 employers said that the standard of JGW+ applicants was at least as good as, if not better than, they expected. While eight recognised that candidates required more support than did other staff, 10 of them felt that the candidates brought positive skills or qualities to the role (despite their lack of work experience). Overall, 19 said that JGW+ participants had performed well or very well in their organisation, with only six encountering issues surrounding performance. Four of these six employers described challenges regarding learners' attendance or timeliness.
- 7.23 Employers were additionally consulted on the impact that JGW+ participation had on their business. Twenty out of 24 reported increased capacity, while only four said that they had experienced an increased workload for other staff. Three reported increased profit, and five specifically said that participating in the programme had helped to improve their relations with customers or clients.
- 7.24 Employer participation in the programme additionally impacted their perceptions of future recruitment. The vast majority described a positive change in their attitude towards offering jobs or work placements to young people (21/24). A similar number (22) said that they would participate in a WG skills, training or employment programme again in future.



## **Challenges in measuring outcomes and impacts**

- 7.25 A key issue identified by stakeholders was the inability to capture the complex, individualised outcomes and impacts achieved by learners. While the most significant difference for one young person might be access to education, for another it might be gaining new practical life skills, and for a third it might be socialisation with which to counteract the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Contractors noted the difficulties of quantifying such wide-reaching qualitative outcomes using a single, universal approach to recording monitoring data. The collation of detailed case studies may support understanding of the significance and nature of impacts experienced by learners.
- 7.26 The main suggestion that stakeholders made for improving monitoring was a shift from measuring 'hard' outcomes to capturing distance travelled, particularly in terms of soft skills and mental health.
- 'Hard measures are not that useful when getting them to walk through the door and attend regularly is the biggest step forward for them.'
- (JGW+ Contractor)
- 7.27 One Contractor had started completing a 'Value Added Matrix' with learners every four weeks to help evidence change. Meanwhile, one WG stakeholder suggested revising performance benchmarks to be more realistic, given the long-term preparatory work needed to get many learners closer to the labour market.
- 7.28 Several stakeholders also mentioned the lack of data sharing as a challenge in capturing evidence of progression or understanding of what generates positive outcomes and impacts for learners. Reasons for this included a lack of knowledge of what data can be legally shared, as well as having insufficient resourcing to collate information from multiple sources. Moreover, it was suggested that more data and feedback on referrals should be shared with referring organisations to help increase their understanding of enablers of and barriers to success.

## Section Summary

- Learners reported wide-ranging benefits and positive outcomes as a direct result of JGW+ participation. Many learners felt that the programme had a positive impact on their job prospects, including those who left the programme early.
- The support shaped participants' understanding of and approach to career development, providing a clearer understanding of their career paths, knowledge and awareness of training and employment opportunities, and increasing their motivation to pursue those opportunities. A total of 95 per cent thought that JGW+ had increased their chances of finding work, and 93 per cent felt that it increased their likelihood of gaining permanent employment.
- As a result of JGW+ participation, 82 per cent of participants referred to improvements in life satisfaction.
- Stakeholders concurred with participants about the impact of support in bringing participants closer to the labour market; however, the complexities faced by participants meant that they needed more sustained support to gain employment.
- More than a quarter (31 per cent) of all learners surveyed were in employment at the time of the survey; however, less than half of these were on permanent or open-ended contracts or in full-time employment.
- Participants who left the programme early often did so for positive reasons (into some form of EET); however, more generally, stakeholders felt that Contractor MI needed strengthening to better understand the reasons behind early leavers.
- Employers reported that the subsidy had enabled them to participate in the programme and for some had enabled them to take on a staff member. Whilst there appeared to be some variability in the nature of support offered to employers, the vast majority of employers felt that the support met their needs.
- Multiple stakeholders raised concerns regarding the inability within the current monitoring system to capture the complex, individualised outcomes and impacts achieved by learners. They highlighted the need to shift from measuring hard outcomes to capturing distance travelled, particularly in terms of soft skills and mental health.

## **8. Summary of Findings and Recommendations**

### **Programme design and context**

- 8.1 The design of the JGW+ programme was informed by learning gained through previous iterations of Jobs Growth Wales and the Traineeships Programme. The adjustments have helped to increase levels of flexibility and inclusivity, with strengthening in wraparound support that aids participant retention and positive progress (regardless of background). JGW+'s design and approach are closely aligned with and supportive of key governmental policy, particularly that associated with the Young Person's Guarantee and the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework.
- 8.2 The programme was, however, designed pre-pandemic and, as such, could not have foreseen the impact on young people arising from the pandemic or the subsequent cost-of-living crisis and the additional challenges placed on young people.
- 8.3 The approach taken by the Welsh Government with Contractors and the willingness and responsiveness of adjustments to the service model in light of these challenges is a reflection of the collaborative, 'can do' approach adopted by the Welsh Government in the management and governance of the programme.
- 8.4 Whilst the profile and nature of young people NEET have been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, some trends amongst this cohort predate March 2020. Since 2016 there has been a steady increase and near doubling in the number of females aged 16–18 who are NEET, and the most recent data show that for the first time since the data have been captured, females who are NEET outnumber males in that age cohort. The situation of those young people classed as NEET has also changed, with economic inactivity (rather than being unemployed and looking for work) much more prevalent amongst the cohort, particularly driven by increasing levels of long-term illness (including mental health conditions).

### **Service model adjustments**

- 8.5 The adjustments to the service model have been widely welcomed by Contractors. The enhancement of pre-engagement activities in response to barriers associated with anxiety, mental health, and social interaction appears to have been highly successful, particularly the 'Get Ready' provision (which appears to have driven considerable engagement during the summer months).

### **Recommendation 1**

It will be beneficial to interrogate monitoring data on the Get Ready component (if MI captures this evidence) in more detail alongside targeted fieldwork in the subsequent phase of the evaluation to better understand the role that it has played in driving engagement.

- 8.6 Allowance for direct referrals to the programme from Autumn 2023 has greatly increased the numbers in the programme, illustrating the potential role of this route to the programme. It is estimated that almost half of the participants now enrolling in the programme are self-referring.
- 8.7 Adjustments to the financial model also appear to have been heavily influential in engagement. Adjustments to the induction fee for Contractors and the training allowance for participants have been particularly instrumental in increasing rates of engagement over recent months.
- 8.8 These adjustments are not without their challenges, however. Constraints with data sharing mean that the assessment of self-referred participants is more complex, with some stakeholder organisations (including EPCs and Contractors) developing methods of assessment with input from the Welsh Government.
- 8.9 The adjustments to the Contractor payment structure have placed increased emphasis (payment) on enrolments and the volume of engagement. As these adjustments are coupled with the need for more sustained engagement with participants (given their additional barriers), this is likely to have considerably increased rates of expenditure per participant.
- 8.10 The increase in training allowance strengthens the incentive from the participant to enrol and, in the context of a cost-of-living crisis, appears to be tackling issues associated with individual and household poverty. There is a risk, however, that the offer may incentivise young people to transition from education or training to benefit from that higher rate of allowance (substitution effects). Furthermore, there are concerns that this influences the driver for engagement in the service amongst participants. Some stakeholders, however, felt that the enhanced training allowance was effective in placing value on a young person's time and efforts, thereby helping to boost their self-esteem.

### **Recommendation 2**

That evaluators gain access to and review programme expenditure over time to assess cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness against other programmes that seek to engage a similar target group.

### **Recommendation 3**

That further detail be captured in the next phase of the evaluation on participant situations prior to engaging in JGW+ and on the role that the training allowance played in their enrolment.

### **Progress and performance**

- 8.11 Monthly enrolments were relatively steady over the first 10–12 months of the programme, albeit with slight spikes of engagement in July and October. Emerging evidence since April 2023 suggests more considerable spikes in these months, and since July a more sustained and higher rate of engagement in the programme is evident. The increased levels of enrolment have in turn resulted in what would appear to be a higher caseload in the programme since July 2023.
- 8.12 The programme is increasingly successful in the engagement of participants, likely because of the enhancements in offer and as it becomes more established as an intervention. Indeed, it is estimated that around one third of all those aged 16–18<sup>63</sup> who are NEET in Wales have engaged with JGW+ over the last 12 months. There is, however, wide geographical variation in rates of engagement, with a 16–19-year-old living in Torfaen just under eight times more likely to be enrolled in JGW+ than those living in Powys.

### **Recommendation 4**

To further explore the influences on geographical variation in the programme through further analysis of participant profiles and referral routes by geography and Contractor.

- 8.13 Participation in JGW+ is dominated by those enrolled in the engagement strand. The latest data suggest that almost two thirds have been placed in that strand, whilst one per cent are enrolled in employment.

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<sup>63</sup> The age group for eligibility for JGW+ was extended to 19 in January 2023.

- 8.14 JGW+ performance data provide a mix of indicators, including programme completed, programme ended, and then various positive outcomes. It is currently unclear in any published material as to what a programme relates to or what the difference is between programme ended and programme completed.

#### **Recommendation 5**

For clearer definitions to be added to published performance data so that the public can better understand what the terminology associated with 'programmes' relates to.

- 8.15 The published data show that in the 2022–23 financial year the programme fell just short of the target for positive outcomes (58 per cent of completers securing a positive outcome in comparison to a target of 60 per cent). However, published data from the most recent quarter show some of the highest rates of positive outcomes since the programme commenced, which means that JGW+ is exceeding its target.
- 8.16 Overarching performance data and specifically the key target of 60 per cent of participants into positive destination outcomes discount the use of neutral outcomes when analysing performance. The proportion of neutral outcomes, however, varies considerably by location and Contractor and, therefore, masks variation in performance.

#### **Recommendation 6**

The profile of all destination outcomes (positive, neutral and negative) should be taken into account when assessing performance at the programme level, and by Contractor and geographical area.

- 8.17 Published data also show that over one fifth of participants are securing employment upon leaving the programme, whilst the learner survey of completers and 'early leavers' identified that more than one quarter of participants are now in employment. This suggests that employment is being obtained by participants without the need to participate in the employment strand, and possibly calls into question the programme design.

#### **Recommendation 7**

That close monitoring of engagement by strand continue, particularly to understand the volume of participation in the employment strand, to understand patterns of strand engagement and any reasons for those.

### **Recommendation 8**

That the participant survey be repeated with greater targeting of those who have completed the programme to better understand all participant destinations (beyond the four-week timeframe for recording outcomes through the programme).

- 8.18 MI data show that those enrolled in JGW+ at a younger age (specifically 15–16), Welsh speakers, and those with higher pre-existing qualifications (Level 2 or Level 3) are statistically significantly more likely to secure positive outcomes than is the ‘average’ JGW+ participant.
- 8.19 There is a slight negative variation in performance for most marginalised groups enrolled in the programme, with isolated instances in which more considerable negative variation in performance is emerging (those of an Asian ethnic origin, and those declaring a disability, specifically ADHD or autism).
- 8.20 Variation in performance is, however, most pronounced at a geographical level. By way of example, those enrolled in JGW+ in Flintshire are more than three times as likely to secure a positive outcome as are those enrolled in Blaenau Gwent.

### **Recommendation 9**

Further analysis of detailed management information by protected characteristic and location as well as targeted fieldwork as part of the next phase of the evaluation to better understand the geographical drivers of performance.

### **Reflections on the delivery model**

- 8.21 Delivery staff, wider stakeholders, and participants were all widely positive about the service delivery model and particularly the adjustments that were made to its design. Some raised concerns regarding the rigidity of JGW+, particularly the ARR-led method of placing learners in JGW+ strands. There were a number of mistaken assumptions amongst Contractor and Sub-Contractor staff that there was limited opportunity for staff to ‘override’ the system based on their professional judgement. Others believed that Contractors were unable to change strand allocations without forcing a young person to ‘drop out’ and restart the assessment process. This posed a risk of deterring learners from rejoining the programme, whereas a simple internal referral system was viewed as a better option.

### **Recommendation 10**

That concerns surrounding rigidity be explored and that the Welsh Government provide messaging to apply professional judgement consistently across the programme, including by Contractors and any Sub-Contractors that they may use.

### **Recommendation 11**

That the understanding of issues surrounding drop-off, restart, and the use of Contractor discretion be reviewed with the aim of ensuring greater consistency in approaches, enabling participants to re-engage in the service more easily, especially in the case of temporary absence.

- 8.22 Marketing and promotional activity associated with the programme was seen to be largely successful, although some stakeholders spoke of the need for the strengthening of promotional activity within the school environment, for the utilisation of a greater diversity of social media channels, and continuing focus on the consistency of messaging (particularly in light of policy changes affecting the delivery of JGW+).

### **Recommendation 12**

That consistency of marketing messaging be regularly reviewed to ensure full alignment with JGW+ policy changes, particularly to ensure that Contractors, EPCs, and young people directly referred to the programme fully understand its current delivery features.

- 8.23 Enrolment in the programme was viewed positively by participants, who perceived JGW+ to be accessible and the staff to be understanding and supportive.
- 8.24 Whilst the programme is viewed as inclusive, there appeared to be little evidence of Contractors working with marginalised groups in the design of inclusive models of support. That said, almost nine in 10 learners felt that the programme was satisfactory or good in terms of inclusion and accessibility.
- 8.25 Stakeholders reported a little demand for Welsh language provision from learners, whilst two Contractors struggled to recruit Welsh-speaking tutors, and extra resourcing costs were considered to be a barrier to Welsh language provision (additional resources have subsequently been provided by the WG for Welsh language provision).



- 8.26 Amongst participants, nine in 10 felt that the support had met or exceeded their expectations, whilst three quarters felt that there was no way in which the programme could be improved.
- 8.27 Only three per cent (3/93) of active participants thought that staff could have been more understanding or supportive, compared to 13 per cent (16/56) of early leavers. This suggests that the staff approach plays a role in learner retention.
- 8.28 Stakeholders viewed JGW+ as filling a gap in local service provision but that perhaps greater integration of other service support might be necessary to ensure that all support options are made available to young people.

### **Recommendation 13**

That the evaluation explores the nature and extent of collaborative or referral activity from JGW+ to better understand the extent of service integration with other support provision, particularly as the number of SPF-resourced activities increases.

### **Outcomes/impacts of support**

- 8.29 Learners reported wide-ranging benefits and positive outcomes as a direct result of JGW+ participation. Many learners felt that the programme had a positive impact on their job prospects, including those who left the programme early. Ninety-five per cent thought that JGW+ had increased their chances of finding work, and 93 per cent felt that it increased their likelihood of gaining permanent employment. Furthermore, 82 per cent of participants referred to improvements in life satisfaction as well as other indicators of well-being since participating in the programme.
- 8.30 Multiple stakeholders, however, raised concerns regarding the inability within the current monitoring system to capture the complex, individualised outcomes and impacts achieved by learners. They highlighted the need to shift from measuring hard outcomes to capturing distance travelled, particularly in terms of soft skills and mental health.

### **Recommendation 14**

That indicators of well-being be captured more consistently as part of the enrolment process for JGW+ participants. This will help in capturing the social value gained through programme participation.

### **Recommendation 15**

That a consistent approach be adopted across the programme for the electronic capture of participant barriers to enrolment and in the tracking and measurement of soft outcomes to help in capturing the impact of JGW+ support.

- 8.31 Stakeholders concurred as to the impact of support but that given the complexities faced by participants, they required more sustained support to gain employment. Where participants left the programme early, they often did so for positive reasons (typically into some form of EET); however, a considerable proportion of those surveyed who had secured employment were typically associated with unsecure (temporary or zero-hour) contracts.
- 8.32 The Contractor-held MI data provide detail on participant situations (early leavers, completers, and whether their outcomes are positive, neutral or negative). This detail should inform the nature of the sample frame for subsequent fieldwork with participants (particularly to better understand those recorded as negative outcomes and to gain further insight into the situations of early leavers and completers over the longer term).

### **Recommendation 16**

That identifiable management information be obtained through Contractors to inform the sample frame for fieldwork.

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## Annexe B – Discussion Guide – Scoping Interviews

### Questions for discussion

1. Please provide an outline of your role and responsibilities concerning JGW+.
2. Please explain how JGW+ operates in relation to your role/in your area. We're not interested at this time in effectiveness etc. As noted earlier, the focus at this stage is on understanding how the programme operates.
3. How strong is the rationale for JGW+ and the support that the programme is providing?
  - a) What factors, if any, could influence the rationale for the programme?
  - b) To what extent will the rationale be influenced by the prevailing economic conditions?
4. Were you involved in the design of JGW+? If so:
  - a) What were the key issues and influences considered in the design of the programme?
  - b) What options were considered?
  - c) Where options were discounted, what were the key reasons for those decisions?
  - d) To what extent were the WCFG Act well-being goals, the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan (formerly REAP), and the social model of disability considered in the design of the JGW+ programme?
5. Are you involved in data collection concerning the programme? If so, please explain:
  - a) What data you collect
  - b) When the data are collected
  - c) Whether it would be possible to share the data with the evaluation team
  - d) Any processes associated with the above
6. What do you perceive are the strengths and weaknesses of how JGW+ has been set up that the evaluation may need to explore? *[The elements of the programme that are within the control of those managing and delivering the programme]*
7. How will we know that JGW+ has been successful? *[There is no need to restrict yourself to any performance indicators that are in place for the programme in responding to this question.]*
8. What do you perceive are the challenges in addressing the inequality agenda through JGW+? And how should success in this area be measured?

9. To inform our thinking and the development of the framework that we'll be using for the evaluation, what are the key factors that we should consider when judging the added value of JGW+?
10. What do you anticipate are the opportunities for the programme? *[External factors that could positively influence its success, management and delivery]*
11. And what do you anticipate are the threats to the programme? *[Again, external factors that could influence its success, management and delivery, but this time in a negative way]*
12. We're proposing to set up a Research Advisory Group (RAG) as part of the evaluation of the programme. This will be a group of learners and parents/guardians that will advise the evaluation process, meeting periodically to explore issues including research design and data collection. We're interested in your views on this proposal and, in particular, on how learners and parents/guardians can be recruited as members of the group.
13. Is there anything that you were expecting me to ask you about that we haven't covered?
14. Is there anything else that we should be aware of or that you would like us to specifically focus on as part of the evaluation?



## Annexe C – Discussion Guide – Participant Telephone Interview (Active Participants)

### Questions for discussion

#### *Stage 1: Interviewee-led*

1. Our records show that you worked with [Provider Name], who supported you through the Jobs Growth Wales+ programme. Please could you tell us about your experience of Jobs Growth Wales+ and the support that you have received?

*Interviewer notes:*

*Don't interrupt — wait for the coda (natural signal that they're done)*

*Don't prompt what you're looking for*

*After the coda ask: 'Is there anything else that you want to tell me?'*

#### *Stage 2: Set questions — only ask if the question has not already been answered in Stage 1.*

2. Please tell me about how you found out about the JGW+ programme.
3. Please tell me about how you accessed JGW+.

*Confirm if it was in person, online or a mix*

*If an organisation set up access, confirm the name of the organisation or if Working Wales set it up*

4. Were there any challenges in terms of accessing JGW+?

*Including logistical challenges in accessing the JGW+ Contractor/office, issues in accessing online (such as IT issues or connectivity), contacting by telephone, etc.*

5. Did you have any accessibility needs/access requirements when you joined the JGW+ programme?
  - a. If Yes, were these needs/requirements met during your involvement with JGW+?
  - b. If not, where were the issues?
    - i. What needs to be improved to address these barriers for you?

6. Are you a Welsh speaker? Yes/No

7. (If Yes at Q6) Did you access the service in Welsh?

*If they didn't, did they want to access it through the Welsh language? If they did, why didn't they? Were there any barriers to accessing the service through the Welsh language?*

*If they did access the service in Welsh, were there any barriers? How easy was it?*

*If it was difficult, please could you tell us more about why the JGW+ service in the Welsh language was difficult for you to access.*

8. What did you expect from JGW+?

*Did JGW+ meet your expectations? Did the service provide more or less than you expected?*

9. How did staff from JGW+ talk with you about your needs or wishes from the programme?

*What kinds of things did you tell them?*

*Can you tell me how useful that was and why you say that?*

10. Do you know through which strand you first joined the JGW+ programme on? If so, which one?

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**Which JGW+ strand started in? [Tick one only]**

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**JGW+ Engagement**

Help to decide what career path to follow or get more help to take part in employment and education.

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**JGW+ Advancement**

Help to get qualifications or support to get a job or career path already in mind, including getting new skills.

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**JGW+ Employment**

Help to get into work because they are ready to start work and know what they want to do.

---

**Don't know/Unsure**

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11. If *No/Don't know/Unsure*, can you tell me a bit about the first things that you did? Use the boxes above to link the respondent to a strand.

12. Do you remember receiving a training allowance from Jobs Growth Wales+?

Yes

No (Go to Q18)

Don't Know (Go to Q18)

13. If Yes, what did you use the allowance for?

14. To what extent did receiving the allowance influence your decision to join Jobs Growth Wales+?  
*Completely                      To some extent                      Not at all                      Don't know*
15. To what extent did the amount of the allowance influence your decision to join the Jobs Growth Wales+ programme?  
*Completely                      To some extent                      Not at all                      Don't know*
16. To what extent did receiving the allowance influence your decision to remain on the Jobs Growth Wales+ programme?  
*Completely                      To some extent                      Not at all                      Don't know*
17. To what extent did receiving the allowance reduce any financial pressure for you?  
*Completely                      To some extent                      Not at all                      Don't know*  
*If 'Completely', 'To some extent' or 'Not at all', ask: 'Why do you say that?'*

18. How else did JGW+ support you?

*This could be, for example, to access training or to gain confidence, employability skills or help to return to work. They may mention working with a key worker. Ask about the things that they did with the worker. Ask how often they had interactions.*

19. Did this support meet the expectations that you had, as you've previously described to me?
20. Did the support meet the needs that you had spoken about with a JGW+ member of staff?  
*Can you tell me why you say that?*
21. Did you take up all of the support that you were offered through JGW+? *Yes/No*
22. [If *No* at Q21] Please could you tell me more about why you didn't take up the support?
23. [If *Yes* at Q21] Were you able to access that support straight away or was there a delay?
24. [If *Yes* at Q21] Who provided the support?
25. [If *Yes* at Q21] Did you feel that this JGW+ strand was the right thing for you?
26. [If *Yes* at Q21] Would you have done those things/had those experiences if you hadn't been on the JGW+ programme? Please explain your answer.

27. Did you move to another strand of the JGW+ programme? *[INTERVIEWER NOTE: Some participants may have moved to a lower strand as needs are identified.]*

*[Tick all that apply]*

<b>JGW+ Engagement</b>	<b>JGW+ Advancement</b>	<b>JGW+ Employment</b>
Help to decide what career path to follow or get more help to take part in employment and education.	Help to get qualifications or support to get a job or career path already in mind, including getting new skills.	Help to get into work because they are ready to start work and know what they want to do.
<b>Don't know/Unsure</b>		

28. Can you tell me how you found the move/switch?

- a. Do you know why you moved strand?
- b. Did you agree with the move?
  - i. Why did you agree or not with the move?

29. [If No at Q27] Is there any reason why you didn't move strand?

30. Can you tell me a little bit about what you are doing at the moment?

*[Employment, education/training, volunteering, unemployed ...]*

*[Check if they are still with JGW+ or another programme — likely if 19 or over.]*

31. Thinking back now to the support from JGW+, generally, what effect, if any, would you say that engaging with JGW+ has had on you and what you're doing now?

32. Did it have any influence on any of the following?

- a) Your understanding of the job or career path that you wanted to follow?
- b) Your approach to job hunting and/or work? If Yes, please explain.
- c) Your motivation to consider employment opportunities and training? If Yes, please explain.
- d) Your knowledge and awareness of the training and employment available to you? If Yes, please explain.
- e) Finding or changing your job/employment? If Yes, please explain.

These next few questions are about how your feelings on aspects of your life have changed since engaging with JGW+. There are no right or wrong answers.

33. For each of these questions I'd like you to give an answer on how these things have changed for you.

a) Overall, how satisfied are you with your life today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I am much more satisfied with my life now.*

*I am a little bit more satisfied with my life now.*

*It's stayed the same.*

*I am a little less satisfied with my life now.*

*I am much less satisfied with my life now.*

b) Overall, in terms of how worthwhile you feel the things that you do in life are, how different do you feel today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel the things I do in my life ...*

*Are much more worthwhile now*

*Are a little more worthwhile now*

*It's stayed the same*

*Are a little less worthwhile now*

*Are much less worthwhile now*

c) Overall, how happy do you feel today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel ...*

*Much happier now*

*A little bit happier now*

*It's stayed the same*

*A little less happier now*

*Much less happier now*

d) Overall, how anxious do you feel today compared to how anxious you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel ...*

*Much less anxious now*

*A little less anxious now*

*It's stayed the same*

*A little more anxious now*

*Much more anxious now*

INTERVIEWER NOTE: If the interviewee identifies that any measures above have *got worse a lot*, say to the interviewee: 'You should get in contact with [Provider Name], as they will be able to support you with that. Alternatively, you could contact:

- **The C.A.L.L. Helpline**, a dedicated mental health helpline for Wales (call 0800 132 737 or text 'help' to 81066 or visit [www.callhelpline.org.uk](http://www.callhelpline.org.uk))
- **The MEIC Helpline Support** for children and young people up to 25 years old, which is open from 8 a.m. to midnight, 7 days a week. You can contact them for free by phoning 080880 23456, texting 84001, or instant-messaging on their website at: [www.meiccymru.org/get-help/](http://www.meiccymru.org/get-help/).

The following services are available 24/7:

- NHS Direct on 111
- Samaritans on 116 123 (Welsh language 0808 164 0123)
- Childline on 0800 1111'

34. Has engaging with JGW+ made any difference to the way in which you feel about your life? Please explain your answer.

35. Are there any ways in which you feel that JGW+ could be improved?

36. *[Ask All]* How did you find JGW+ in terms of inclusion and accessibility?

- a. Are there any ways in which JGW+ could be improved in terms of inclusion and accessibility? *[Only ask if not covered at Q28 above.]*
- b. To what extent did you feel able to complain if you felt that you were being treated unfairly or discriminated against for any reason? *[Completely, To some extent, A little, Not at all]*
  - i. *[If A little or Not at all, can you explain briefly why you say that?]*
    1. Are you aware of the complaints procedure for your Contractor?
- c. To what extent do you feel that JGW+ ensures that your needs are reflected in the kinds of support that you need from the programme? *[Completely, To some extent, A little, Not at all]*
  - i. *[If A little or Not at all, can you explain briefly why you say that?]*

37. Is there anything further that you would like to add about your experience of JGW+?

## Annexe D – Discussion Guide – Participant Destination Survey (JGW+ Completers)

### Engagement with Jobs Growth Wales+

1. Can I confirm that you first joined Jobs Growth Wales+ with [Provider Name] in [seeded Month/Year]?
  - a. Is this correct? *[Yes/No]*
  - b. [If No to Q1A] Can you please confirm which month and year you first joined Jobs Growth Wales+? *[Month/Year]*

2. Which of the JGW+ support strands did you take part in?

*[Tick ALL that apply]*

<b>JGW+ Engagement</b>	<b>JGW+ Advancement</b>	<b>JGW+ Employment</b>
Help to decide what career path to follow or get more help to take part in employment and education.	Help to get qualifications or support to get a job or career path already in mind, including getting new skills.	Help to get into work because they are ready to start work and know what they want to do.
<b>Don't know/Unsure</b>		

3. Can I confirm if you completed your Jobs Growth Wales+ programme of support?

Yes (Go to Q4)

No, I'm still being supported by JGW+ (Go to Q6)

No, I left the programme early (Go to Q5)

4. Can you please confirm which month and year you completed your Jobs Growth Wales+ programme/support? *[Month/Year]* (Go to Q6)

5. Can you please confirm which month and year you left the Jobs Growth Wales+ programme/support? *[Month/Year]* (Go to Q6)

6. Please could you tell us about your experience of Jobs Growth Wales+ and the support that you have received?

*Interviewer notes:*

*Don't interrupt — wait for the coda (natural signal that they're done)*

*Don't prompt what you're looking for*

*After the coda ask: 'Is there anything else that you want to tell me?'*

7. What did you expect from JGW+?

Did JGW+ meet your expectations? Did the service provide more or less than you expected?

8. Are there any ways in which you feel that JGW+ could be improved?

9. *[Ask All]* How did you find JGW+ in terms of inclusion and accessibility?

- a. Are there any ways in which JGW+ could be improved in terms of inclusion and accessibility *[Only ask if not covered at Q8 above]*
- b. To what extent did you feel able to complain if you felt that you were being treated unfairly or discriminated against whilst on the JGW+ programme for any reason?  
*[Completely, To some extent, A little, Not at all]*
  - i. *[If A little or Not at all, can you explain briefly why you say that?]*
    1. Were you aware of the complaints procedure for your contractor?
- c. To what extent do you feel that JGW+ ensures that your needs are reflected in the kinds of support that you need from the programme? *[Completely, To some extent, A little, Not at all]*
  - i. *[If A little or Not at all, can you explain briefly why you say that?]*

Situation since joining the programme

10. Which of the following would you describe as your main activity now?

Interviewer note: Please read out codes and single code.

If the interviewee is on maternity or paternity leave or waiting to start a new job, then please code as 'Employed including by a family member, or on an apprenticeship'.

If the interviewee is waiting for a training course to start or on JGW+, code as 'In education or training'.

- Employed including by a family member, or on an apprenticeship
- Unemployed and looking for work
- In education or training
- Working in a voluntary, unpaid role or internship
- Not in employment or looking for paid work (for example, looking after children or relatives, retired), or training
- DO NOT READ OUT: Other



- DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know
  - [If *Other*] Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

In employment

11. [If *Employed* selected for Q6] Is this the job that you got through taking part in the JGW+ programme? [*Yes/No*]

12. If *No*, are you still working at the same organisation that you were working for/had a work placement with through the JGW+ programme?

13. What is your job title and what are your main duties or responsibilities?

Job title:

Main duties/responsibilities:

14. When did your current job start? [*Month/Year*]

15. Is the job:

- On a permanent or open-ended contract
- On a fixed-term contract lasting 12 months or longer
- On a fixed-term contract lasting less than 12 months
- On a temporary or casual basis
- On a zero-hours contract
- Other (specify)

16. How many hours a week do you usually work on average, not counting meal breaks but including any paid overtime?

Interviewer note: Do not read out codes, single code.

- Less than 16 hours
- 16 to 30 hours
- 31 to 39 hours
- 40 or more hours
- Don't know

a. [If *Less than 16 hours* selected in Q16 You said that you are working part-time. Would you prefer to be working on a full-time basis? [*Yes/No/Don't know*]

17. Please can you tell me what your gross pay is, including any overtime, bonuses, commissions or tips but BEFORE any deductions for tax, national insurance, pension contributions, and so on?

Interviewer note: Prompt as necessary.

- If unclear on this ask: 'Is that per year, month or week?'
- If they give an hourly figure ask: 'So what would that total in an average week?'
- If they don't know/refuse ask: 'Could you give an approximate or rough figure, per year, month or week?'

<b>Annual</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	
Less than £2,000	Less than £166	Less than £38	1
£2,000–£3,999	£166–£333	£38–£76	2
£4,000–£4,999	£334–£396	£77–£91	3
£5,000–£5,999	£397–£499	£92–£114	4
£6,000–£7,999	£500–£666	£115–£153	5
£8,000–£9,999	£667–£832	£154–£192	6
£10,000–£11,999	£833–£999	£193–£230	7
£12,000–£14,999	£1,000–£1,249	£231–£289	8
£15,000–£17,999	£1,250–£1,499	£290–£346	9
£18,000–£20,999	£1,500–£1,749	£347–£403	10
£21,000–£23,999	£1,750–£1,999	£404–£461	11
£24,000–£26,999	£2,000–£2,249	£462–£519	12
£27,000–£29,999	£2,250–£2,499	£520–£577	13
£30,000+	£2,500+	£578+	14
DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know			15
DO NOT READ OUT: Refused			16

18. Are there opportunities for promotion or further progression in your current job?  
*[Yes/No/Don't know]*

In education or training

19. [If *In education or training* is selected for Q10] Are you still in the education/training that JGW+ secured for you? [Yes/No]

20. [If *In education or training* is selected for Q10] Which of the following types of education or training are you currently doing? Are you ...?

Interviewer note: Please read out codes and single code.

- In school
- In college full-time — 16 hours or more a week
- In college part-time — less than 16 hours a week
- On a course whilst in work
- On a JGW+ strand
- ADD IF NECESSARY: These generally involve individuals spending at least a few weeks with businesses or other organisations to gain practical work experience ahead of taking up regular employment
- DO NOT READ OUT: In university
- Other (PLEASE SPECIFY)
- DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know

Other activity

21. Except from the activity that we have already mentioned ([Q10 response]), since you joined JGW+ in [Month/Year] have you had periods doing other things such as [other responses in Q10]?

*READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.*

- No, just the activity/activities mentioned for the whole time
- Yes, had a period doing other things
- DO NOT READ OUT: Can't remember

22. [If *No, just the activity/activities mentioned for the whole time* selected in Q20] Can you confirm in which month/year the course/employment started? [Month/Year]

23. [If *Yes, had a period of doing other things* selected in Q20] So prior to [Course/Employment — their current situation] was your main activity paid work, education or training, being unemployed and looking for work, or none of these?

- Paid work
- Education or training
- Unemployed and looking for work
- None of these
- DO NOT READ OUT: Don't know

24. [If *Yes, had a period of doing other things* selected in Q21] And when did this commence? [Month/Year]

a. And when did it last until? [Month/Year]

Unemployed and not looking for work

25. [If *Unemployed and not looking for work* selected in Q10] You mentioned earlier that you are not looking for work currently. Are you not looking for work for any of the following reasons?

Interviewer note: Please read out codes, multiple code.

- Long-term health problem or disabled
- Retired
- Doing unpaid voluntary work
- Not needing or wanting employment
- Not looking for work, as there are no jobs available
- Or is there some other reason for why you are not looking for a job? (PLEASE SPECIFY)
- DO NOT READ OUT: Can't remember

Not working/volunteering and not retired

26. Which, if any, of the following things make it difficult currently for you to find work? [*Tick all that apply*]

- Not having the right qualifications
- Not having the right skills
- Not having relevant work experience
- Not able to find childcare (e.g. right hours not available or spaces)
- Not able to afford childcare
- Having caring responsibilities
- Health problems
- Having an impairment
- Your age
- Alcohol or drug dependency
- Having a criminal record
- No appropriate jobs where you live
- Hard to get appropriate work
- No job available with desired working hours (e.g. may want full-time but can only find part-time/holding off for a full-time position)
- No job available in my preferred language of Welsh
- Believing that you would not be better off financially in work
- Were there any other reasons for why it was difficult for you to find work? (PLEASE SPECIFY)
- Don't know
- None of these

### Reflections

27. Please answer the following questions about how you feel about the following issues using a scale of '0' to '10', where '0' is 'not at all positive' and '10' is 'extremely positive'.

- My work-related skills
- My work prospects overall
- My job security (e.g. likelihood of getting a permanent job)
- My chances of finding satisfying work
- My future pay prospects
- My ideas on what to do in life

28. [If a positive ranking, i.e. between 6 and 10, in Q27] To what extent do you think that participating in Jobs Growth Wales+ has contributed to how positive you feel about these things? [*To a large extent, To some extent, Not at all, Don't know*]

- Your work-related skills
- Your chances of finding satisfying work
- Your work prospects overall
- Your job security (e.g. likelihood of getting a permanent job)
- Future pay prospects
- Ideas about what to do in life

29. These next few questions are about how your feelings on aspects of your life have changed since engaging with JGW+. There are no right or wrong answers.

For each of these questions I'd like you to give an answer on how these things have changed for you.

- a) Overall, how satisfied are you with your life today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I am much more satisfied with my life now*

*I am a little more satisfied with my life now*

*It's stayed the same*

*I am a little less satisfied with my life now*

*I am much less satisfied with my life now*

- b) Overall, how different do you feel that the things that you do in your life are worthwhile today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel the things that I do in my life ...*

*Are much more worthwhile now*

*Are a little more worthwhile now*

*It's stayed the same*

*Are a little less worthwhile now*

*Are much less worthwhile now*

c) Overall, how happy do you feel today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel ...*

*Much happier now*

*A little happier now*

*It's stayed the same*

*A little less happy now*

*Much less happy now*

d) Overall, how anxious do you feel today compared to how anxious you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel ...*

*Much less anxious now*

*A little less anxious now*

*It's stayed the same*

*A little more anxious now*

*Much more anxious now*

30. Has engaging with JGW+ made any difference to the way in which you feel about your life? Please explain your answer.

31. Is there anything further that you would like to add about your experience of JGW+?

### **Closing questions**

Would you be willing for us to link your responses in this survey with governmental datasets about employment in the UK and Wales, and with other data that we are collecting as part of this evaluation? This linking will be done so that individuals cannot be identified in any analysis undertaken with those data. *[Yes/No]*

## **Annexe E – Discussion Guide – Early Leaver Qualitative Interview**

### **Questions for discussion**

#### *Stage 1: Interviewee-led*

1. Our records show that you worked with [Provider Name], who supported you through the Jobs Growth Wales+ programme. Please could you tell us about your experience of Jobs Growth Wales+, the support that you received, and why you left before completing the programme?

#### *Interviewer notes:*

*Don't interrupt — wait for the coda (natural signal that they're done)*

*Don't prompt what you're looking for*

*After the coda ask: 'Is there anything else that you want to tell me?'*

#### *Stage 2: Set questions — only ask if the question has not already been answered in Stage 1.*

2. Please tell me about how you found out about the JGW+ programme.
3. Please tell me about how you accessed JGW+.

*Confirm if it was in person, online or a mix*

*If an organisation set up access, confirm the name of the organisation or if Working Wales set it up*

4. Were there any challenges in terms of accessing JGW+?

*Including logistical challenges in accessing the JGW+ Contractor/office, issues in accessing online (such as IT issues or connectivity), contacting by telephone, etc.*

5. Are you a Welsh speaker? Yes/No
6. (If Yes at Q5) Did you access the service in Welsh?



*If they didn't, did they want to access it through the Welsh language? If they did, why didn't they? Were there any barriers to accessing the service through the Welsh language? If they did access the service in Welsh — ease, challenges? If it was difficult, please could you tell us more about why the JGW+ service in the Welsh language was difficult for you to access?*

7. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person or have other specific needs? Yes/No

8. (If Yes at Q7) Did you experience any barriers or challenges to accessing the JGW+ service?

*If it was difficult, please could you tell us more about why the JGW+ service was difficult for you to access?*

9. What were your expectations of the support that JGW+ could offer you?

*Did JGW+ meet those expectations? Did the service provide more or less than you expected?*

10. How did staff from [Name of provider worked with] talk with you about your needs or wishes from the programme?

*What kinds of things did you tell them?*

*Can you tell me how useful that was and why you say that?*

11. Do you know through which strand you first joined the JGW+ programme on? If so, which one?

**Which JGW+ strand started in? [Tick one only]**

<b>JGW+ Engagement</b>	<b>JGW+ Advancement</b>	<b>JGW+ Employment</b>
Help to decide what career path to follow or get more help to take part in employment and education.	Help to get qualifications or support to get a job or career path already in mind, including getting new skills.	Help to get into work because they are ready to start work and know what they want to do.
<b>Don't know/Unsure</b>		

12. If *No/Don't know/Unsure*, can you tell me a bit about the first things that you did? Use the boxes above to link the respondent to a strand.

13. Do you remember receiving a training allowance from Jobs Growth Wales+?

Yes            No (Go to Q18)            Don't know (Go to Q18)

14. If Yes, what did you use the allowance for?

15. To what extent did receiving the allowance influence your decision to join Jobs Growth Wales+?

Completely            To some extent            Not at all            Don't know

16. To what extent did the amount of the allowance influence your decision to join the Jobs Growth Wales+ programme?

Completely            To some extent            Not at all            Don't know

17. To what extent did the amount of the allowance influence your decision to leave the Jobs Growth Wales+ programme?

Completely            To some extent            Not at all            Don't know

*If 'Completely' or 'To some extent', why do you say that?*

18. How else did JGW+ support you and how often?

*This could be, for example, to access training or to gain confidence, employability skills or help to return to work. They may mention working with a key worker. Ask about the things that they did with the worker.*

19. Did the support meet the expectations that you had, as you've previously described to me?

20. Did the support meet the needs that you had spoken about with a JGW+ member of staff?

*Can you tell me why you say that?*

21. Did you take up all of the support that you were offered through JGW+? Yes/No

22. [If No at Q21] Please could you tell me more about why you didn't take up the support?

23. [If Yes at Q21] Were you able to access that support straight away or was there a delay?

24. [If Yes at Q21] Who provided the support? What support did you receive?

25. [If Yes at Q21] Did you feel that this JGW+ work strand was the right thing for you?

26. [If Yes at Q21] Would you have accessed the support that JGW+ offered you without the programme? Please explain your answer.

27. Did you move to another strand of the JGW+ programme? *[INTERVIEWER NOTE: Some participants may have moved to a lower strand as needs are identified.]*

28. [If Yes at Q27] Which strand/s did you move to after starting with JGW+? *[Tick All that apply]*

*[Tick all that apply]*

<b>JGW+ Engagement</b>	<b>JGW+ Advancement</b>	<b>JGW+ Employment</b>
Help to decide what career path to follow or get more help to take part in employment and education.	Help to get qualifications or support to get a job or career path already in mind, including getting new skills.	Help to get into work because they are ready to start work and know what they want to do.
<b>Don't know/Unsure</b>		

29. Can you tell me how you found the move/switch?

- Do you know why you moved strand?
- Did you agree with the move?
  - a. Why did you agree or not with the move?

30. [If No at Q27] Is there any reason for why you didn't move strand?

31. We understand that you left the JGW+ programme before you had completed it. Could you outline the reasons why? *[Probe as to whether they were dismissed or left the job early (and, if so, for what reasons).]*

Code for Q31 but capture notes on what they said

Dismissed (1)

Left the job early (2)

Left for another position (3)

Issues encountered with employer (4)

Left for another training course/other education (5)

Left to do something else (please specify) (6)

Any other reason (please specify) (7)

32. Did you seek any help for any of the reasons for why you left the JGW+ programme early?

(If **Yes**: Probe from whom, the type of support, and whether it helped at all)

(If **No**: Any reason why you didn't seek any help?)

33. Is there anything that could have been done to help you to complete the JGW+ programme?

34. Can you tell me a little bit about what you are doing at the moment?

*[Employment, education/training, volunteering, unemployed ...]*

*[Check if they are still with JGW+ or another programme — likely if 19 or over.]*

35. Thinking back now to the support from JGW+, generally, what effect, if any, would you say that engaging with JGW+ has had on you and what you're doing now?

36. Did it have any influence on any of the following?

a) Your understanding of the job or career path that you wanted to follow?

b) Your approach to job hunting and/or work? If **Yes**, please explain.

c) Your motivation to consider employment opportunities and training? If **Yes**, please explain.

d) Your knowledge and awareness of the training and employment available to you? If **Yes**, please explain.

e) Finding or changing your job/employment? If **Yes**, please explain.

These next few questions are about how your feelings on aspects of your life have changed since engaging with JGW+. There are no right or wrong answers.

For each of these questions I'd like you to give an answer on how these things have changed for you.

- a) Overall, how satisfied are you with your life today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I am much more satisfied with my life now*

*I am a little more satisfied with my life now*

*It's stayed the same*

*I am a little less satisfied with my life now*

*I am much less satisfied with my life now*

- b) Overall, in terms of how worthwhile you feel the things that you do in life are, how different do you feel today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel that the things I do in my life ...*

*Are much more worthwhile now*

*Are a little more worthwhile now*

*It's stayed the same*

*Are a little less worthwhile now*

*Are much less worthwhile now*

- c) Overall, how happy do you feel today compared to how you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel ...*

*Much happier now*

*A little happier now*

*It's stayed the same*

*A little less happy now*

*Much less happy now*

- d) Overall, how anxious do you feel today compared to how anxious you felt before taking part in JGW+?

*I feel ...*

*Much less anxious now*

*A little less anxious now*

*It's stayed the same*

*A little more anxious now*

*Much more anxious now*

[INTERVIEWER NOTE: If the interviewee identifies that any measures above have *got worse a lot*, say to the interviewee: 'You should get in contact with [Provider Name], as they will be able to support you with that. Alternatively, you could contact:

- **The C.A.L.L Helpline**, a dedicated mental health helpline for Wales (call 0800 132 737 or text 'help' to 81066 or visit [www.callhelpline.org.uk](http://www.callhelpline.org.uk))
- **The MEIC Helpline Support** for children and young people up to 25 years old, which is open from 8 a.m. to midnight, 7 days a week. You can contact them for free by phoning 080880 23456, texting 84001, or instant-messaging on their website at: [www.meiccymru.org/get-help/](http://www.meiccymru.org/get-help/).

The following services are available 24/7:

- NHS Direct on 111
- Samaritans on 116 123 (Welsh language 0808 164 0123)
- Childline on 0800 1111'

37. Can you tell me a little about the biggest difference that JGW+ has made to you?

38. Are there any ways in which you feel that JGW+ could be improved?

39. Finally, is there anything further that you would like to add about your experience of JGW+?

## **Annexe F – Discussion Guide – Interviews with JGW+ Prime Contractor Staff**

### **Questions for discussion**

#### **Introduction**

1. Please can you introduce yourself and your role within JGW+ at your organisation?

#### **Engagement and provision of support**

2. Generally, how effective is the referral approach in attracting and engaging young people in JGW+? Please consider this in terms of (a) the referral of customers to the service by Working Wales, (b) other third parties such as local authority EPC contacts, and (c) direct-referral.
  - a. How have these approaches changed since JGW+ started in April 2022?
  - b. How successful are these different methods?
  - c. Is this approach consistent across Wales?
  - d. Are there any areas that need further development?
3. How are relationships with referral organisations maintained and how are these organisations kept up to date with any changes within your JGW+ delivery?
4. Is there a waiting time from initial contact to assessment?
  - a. If so, are there any particular reasons for this? And how is this being managed?
  - b. If not, are there any particular reasons for this?
5. How well does the JGW+ assessment process work to ensure that young people can be successfully and effectively supported?
  - a. What are the main needs that this assessment is highlighting that young people need support with?
  - b. Do you think that the assessment process could be enhanced or improved in any way?
6. How is the young person's well-being assessed, specifically issues of life satisfaction, anxiety, perceptions of being worthwhile, and happiness?

- a. How is the funding for assessment and one-to-one help being utilised by your organisation?
  - b. What are the main needs that this assessment is highlighting that young people require support with?
  - c. To what extent would you say that the funding for JGW+ is sufficient to meet these needs?
    - i. How could funding be improved to better meet young people's well-being needs?
  - d. Do you think that well-being assessments could be enhanced or improved in any way?
7. How well do you think that the needs assessment approach enables you to accurately allocate a young person to a JGW+ support strand?
- a. Do there seem to be any differences between the three support strands?
  - b. Do you have any good or bad examples of how this has worked out?
  - c. In light of these examples, are there any changes that you have made/could see being made to needs assessment that might improve the allocation process?
8. Is 'dropout' by young people, at any stage in your JGW+ provision, an issue? Is there any variance in this by different support strand and/or region?
- a. If so, what improvements or changes could be implemented to reduce those leaving JGW+ support?
9. How is your JGW+ service designed to ensure that those accessing the service in the Welsh language are given equal opportunities and access to training through the medium of Welsh?
- a. Have there been any challenges to providing Welsh language services?
  - b. How have the views of Welsh language service users been incorporated into the design of your services?
  - c. How are you engaging with young people from these communities to raise awareness of the programme to encourage them to take up its support?



10. How is your JGW+ service designed to ensure that those accessing the service from Black, Asian or minority ethnic groups are given equal opportunities and access to training?
- a. Have there been any challenges to providing support to young people from these groups?
  - b. How have the views of service users from Black, Asian or minority ethnic groups been incorporated into the design of your services?
  - c. How are you engaging with young people from these communities to raise awareness of the programme to encourage them to take up its support?
11. How is your JGW+ service designed to ensure that those accessing the service from LGBTQI+ communities are given equal opportunities and access to training?
- a. Have there been any challenges to providing support to young people from these groups?
  - b. How have the views of service users from LGBTQI+ groups been incorporated into the design of your services?
  - c. How are you engaging with young people from these communities to raise awareness of the programme to encourage them to take up its support?
12. How is your JGW+ service designed to ensure that disabled people accessing the service are given equal opportunities and access to training?
- a. Was a budget assigned for this work?
  - b. Have there been any challenges to providing support to young people from these groups? [*PROBE: Provision for particular disability groups — deaf, speech impediment, people with visual impairments.*]
  - c. How have the views of disabled service users been incorporated into the design of your services?
  - d. How are you engaging with disabled young people to raise awareness of the programme to encourage them to take up its support?
13. How does your JGW+ delivery ensure that it is up to date with the latest employment information (including engaging with external stakeholders and local labour market information)?

14. How do your JGW+ staff engage directly with employers?

- a. How does this engagement feed into your JGW+ provision?
- b. Could this be improved/enhanced in any way?

### **Support strands**

15. What is the average time in months that young people spend in each support strand from the first referral?

- a. Is there anything that explains this at all?
- b. How might these support times be improved/enhanced for those young people?

16. Do you have any comments on delivery by each of the strands?

- a. Are any more difficult/challenging than others?
- b. Are there any ways in which these strands could be refined or developed?

### **Outcomes**

17. How would you summarise the outcomes that JGW+ is generating for young people?

- a. How do these differ by support strand?
  - i. Why do you think that is?
- b. How do the outcomes differ by region?
  - i. Why do you think that is?

18. Thinking of these outcomes, how much of these can be attributed to the work of JGW+?

19. Is JGW+ helping young people to reach their employment goals?

- a. Why do you say that?
- b. Where could JGW+ be improved to achieve more success?

## Welsh Government programme management/support

20. How would you describe the way in which the Welsh Government have managed JGW+?

21. We're aware of some of the changes that the Welsh Government have made to the way in which JGW+ operates. Of those changes, which do you think have been the most important? If so, can you explain why you say that?

Changes include:

Provision of additional enrichment activities to support well-being and/or engagement with the programme

Learning Unit Cost Recovery

Widening range of Get Ready activities available to young people

Increasing the rate of training allowance

Reimbursement of the costs of one meal for participants

Availability of Level 2 qualifications through advancement strand delivery

Extension of age of enrolment to 19

22. To what extent do you think that the increase in JGW+ allowance for learners had an impact on uptake and retention?

23. How useful have the networking opportunities with other Contractors been?

- a. Can you give any examples of these at all?
- b. Is there any way in which this could be enhanced or improved at all?

24. How have you managed relationships with your Sub-Contractors?

- a. Can you give any examples of these at all?
- b. Is there any way in which these relationships could be enhanced or improved?
  - i. Is there a role for the Welsh Government in this at all? If so, what could that role involve?

25. Is there anything further that you would like to add or feel is important to the evaluation?

## **Annexe G – Discussion Guide – Employer Depth – Process-Orientated**

1. Can you tell me a little bit about your organisation? What products do you develop/what services do you provide? What sector does your organisation work in?

a. What is your role within the organisation?

2. Is your business or organisation located on a single site or spread over multiple sites?

*Single/Multiple/Don't know*

3. How many people does your organisation employ in total?

a. (If at multiple sites clarify whether this figure is for the site or whole organisation) How many people does your organisation employ at your site

4. How did you first hear about Jobs Growth Wales Plus?

a. Can you recall roughly how long ago this was?

5. Why did your business or organisation decide to recruit through Jobs Growth Wales Plus?

6. Has your organisation previously been involved in other Welsh Government youth employment programmes?

a. If Yes, can you tell me which ones?

7. Can you tell me about your organisation's recruitment plans prior to hearing about JGW+?

- What recruitment challenges were you facing?
- Were you aiming to offer, or already offering, work placements to young people?
- Were you aiming to recruit new staff anyway? Did you have a specific role(s) in mind at the time? What were these roles?

8. Once you had decided to engage with the JGW+ programme, did that influence or change the way in which you recruited for jobs and/or placements for young people?
  - If it did, in what ways did it influence the way in which you recruited for jobs/placements?
  
9. Can you recall the name of the organisation (JGW+ Contactor/training provider) that has provided you with support through the programme? *[If they can't recall prompt with names; if not leave blank.]*
  - a. What type of support have they provided to you/your organisation throughout the recruitment and employment/placement process? *[Check if any difference between placement and employment experiences.]*
  - b. Did the support offered by that organisation meet your needs?
    - i. Can you tell me a little about why you say that?
  - c. Was support offered in different languages (either English or Welsh)?
  - d. In what ways (if at all) did you find the support useful?
  - e. How (if at all) could support that they offered be improved?
    - i. Would you have preferred support in a different language?
  - f. Were you offered any support around improving the equity of your organisation's recruitment — particularly around ethnic diversity, LGBTQI+ individuals, or disabled people, or for Welsh language speakers?
    - i. If support was offered, how has this changed your organisation's practice?
    - ii. Do you think that support could have been improved in any way?
    - iii. If not, would you have valued any support in these areas and what would have been useful for your organisation?

### **Recruitment process**

10. How did you find the process of advertising vacancies/placements with JGW+? *[If do offer both vacancies and placements probe if any difference.]*
  - a. How useful have you found the arrangements for advertising vacancies/placements?
  - b. What help or guidance did you receive from the JGW+ Contractor?
    - i. How useful was this advice?
    - ii. Would you have benefitted from more support?
    - iii. Did the JGW+ Contractor discuss the potential benefits of recruiting someone with Welsh language skills? *Yes/No/Don't know*

- iv. Did the JGW+ Contractor discuss the potential benefits of recruiting from more diverse backgrounds, e.g. greater ethnic diversity, from LGBTQI+ groups?
  - v. Did the JGW+ Contractor discuss the potential benefits of recruiting disabled people?
- c. What aspects of the process could have been improved?

11. How did the applicants for the positions/placements that you advertised through JGW+ compare to your expectations? *[Probe around the number of applications and the quality of applications received.]*

- a. How did these applicants compare to other applicants from non-JGW+ routes? *[Probe if there was any difference in the quality in these.]*
- b. What were the most important factors for you/your organisation when deciding which candidate(s) to offer a JGW+ job/placement to? *[Probe whether they were looking for specific skills, qualifications, previous experience, and personal characteristics (enthusiasm etc.) and if these varied between jobs and placements.]*
- c. Where you rejected applicants, what were the reasons for this? *[Probe: quality of applications (e.g. spelling & grammar/presentation), skills, qualifications, work experience, and personal characteristics (enthusiasm etc.).]*

12. Could you describe how you went about selecting a candidate(s) for the JGW+ jobs? *[Probe as to whether it involved an interview, or, if not, what they were looking for in an application and how many employees were involved in reviewing the application(s).]*

- a. Was this different where you were offering a placement? If so, how was it different?

13. Compared to a typical recruitment process for young people, how did using the JGW+ programme to secure an employee differ? *[Probe around cost and ease of recruitment.]*

14. Have you participated in JGW or Traineeships previously (i.e. before 2022 under the previous Jobs Growth Wales programme or Traineeships Programme)?

- a. [If Yes] How has your recent experience of JGW+ been different from the previous version of Jobs Growth Wales or Traineeships?

15. How many employees have you recruited through JGW+? *[If none, go to Q17.]*

16. With regards to the employee(s) recruited through JGW+, are you able to give me examples of up to a maximum of three roles that you have recruited through the programme?

	Role 1	Role 2	Role 3
What is the role/job that you recruited to?			
What tasks do they typically undertake in this role?			
What types of training have you provided for this role?			
How prepared for work do you think that these young people were?			
How have they performed in this role?			

17. How many placements have you filled through JGW+? *[If none go to Q19.]*

- a. Of these placements, how many have you then offered jobs to?
  - i. For those who have been offered jobs, how many were:
    1. Permanent?
    2. Full-time?
    3. Part-time?

18. With regards to the placement(s) recruited through JGW+, are you able to give me examples of up to a maximum of three roles/placements that you have filled through the programme?

	Role 1	Role 2	Role 3
What is the role/job involved in the placement?			
What tasks do they typically undertake in this role?			
What types of training have you provided for this role?			
How prepared for work do you think that these young people were?			
How have they performed in this role?			

19. Have you encountered any issues because of hiring a young person through JGW+?

[Probe for the nature of these, including if this has covered any specific support needs for the young person, and if there is any difference between placements and jobs.]

- a. Have you requested support from the JGW+ Contractor to resolve any issues? If so, how helpful has it been?

**Impact-related questions**

20. How would your organisation/business have completed the work done by the employee had you not hired a young person through JGW+?

21. What positive impacts has participating in JGW+ had on your business?

PROBE: effects on workforce (training, motivation, diversity),  
effects on business outcomes (new ideas/enthusiasm, energy, unique skills, filled skills gap, improved productivity),  
effects on employer reputation,  
cost-effectiveness of recruitment  
Anything else?

22. What negative impacts has participating in JGW+ had on your business, if any?

PROBE: Effects on workforce (training, motivation),  
Effects on business outcomes (productivity, efficiency),  
Effects on employer reputation,  
Effectiveness of recruitment  
Anything else?

23. Has your experience of JGW+ changed your attitude towards hiring young people?

- a. Or offering work placements to young people?
  - i. If Yes, in what ways?
  - ii. Has this fed through into changes in your recruitment plans/policies?

24. Would your organisation participate in a Welsh Government skills, training or employment programme again in the future? Why/why not?

25. Is there anything else that we should be aware of about your experiences of JGW+?



## **Annexe H – Discussion Guide – Interviews with Local Authority Staff**

### **Introduction**

1. Please can you introduce yourself and your role with regard to JGW+ at your organisation?

### **Engagement and provision of support**

2. Generally, how effective is the referral approach in attracting and engaging young people in JGW+? Please consider this in terms of (a) the referral of customers to the service by Working Wales, (b) other third parties such as local authority EPC contacts, and (c) direct-referral.
  - a. How have these approaches changed since JGW+ started in April 2022?
  - b. How successful are these different methods?
  - c. Are there any areas that need further development?
3. How are relationships with referral organisations maintained locally and how are these organisations kept up to date with any changes within JGW+ delivery?
4. Is there a waiting time locally from initial contact to assessment?
  - a. If so, are there any particular reasons for this? And how is this being managed?
  - b. If not, are there any particular reasons for this?
5. How well does the JGW+ assessment process work to ensure that young people can be successfully and effectively supported in your area?
  - a. What are the main needs that this assessment is highlighting that young people need support with?
  - b. Do you think that the assessment process could be enhanced or improved in any way?

6. How is the young person's well-being assessed in your area, specifically issues of life satisfaction, anxiety, perceptions of being worthwhile, and happiness?
  - a. How is the funding for assessment and one-to-one help being utilised by JGW+ Contractors in your area?
  - b. What are the main needs that this assessment is highlighting that young people require support with?
  - c. To what extent would you say that the funding for JGW+ is sufficient to meet these needs?
    - i. How could funding be improved to better meet young people's well-being needs?
  - d. Do you think that well-being assessments could be enhanced or improved in any way?
  
7. How well do you think that the needs assessment approach enables young people to be accurately allocated to a JGW+ support strand?
  - a. Do there seem to be any differences between the three support strands?
  - b. Do you have any good or bad examples of how this has worked out?
  - c. In light of these examples, are there any changes that you have made/could see being made to needs assessment that might improve the allocation process?
  
8. Is 'dropout' by young people, at any stage in JGW+ provision, an issue locally? Is there any variance in this by different support strand?
  - a. If so, what improvements or changes could be implemented to reduce those leaving JGW+ support?
  
9. How inclusive is the JGW+ service in your local area to ensure that those accessing the service are given equal opportunities and access to training and support?
  - a. Probe: Welsh language provision?
  - b. Black, Asian or minority ethnic groups
  - c. LGBTQI+ communities
  - d. Disabled people
  - e. How are you engaging with young people from these communities to raise awareness of the programme to encourage them to take up its support?

## Support strands

10. Do you have any comments on local delivery by each of the strands?
- Are any more difficult/challenging than others?
  - Are there any ways in which these strands could be refined or developed?

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### JGW+ strands for reference

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JGW+ Engagement	JGW+ Advancement	JGW+ Employment
Help to decide what career path to follow or get more help to take part in employment and education.	Help to get qualifications or support to get a job or career path already in mind, including getting new skills.	Help to get into work because they are ready to start work and know what they want to do.

## Outcomes

11. How would you summarise the outcomes that JGW+ is generating for young people locally?
- How do these differ by support strand?
    - Why do you think that is?
12. Thinking of these outcomes, how much of these can be attributed to the work of JGW+?
13. Is JGW+ helping young people locally to reach their employment goals?
- Why do you say that?
  - Where could JGW+ be improved to achieve more success?

## Welsh Government programme management/support

14. How would you describe the way in which the Welsh Government have managed JGW+?
15. We're aware of some of the changes that the Welsh Government have made to the way in which JGW+ operates. Of those changes, which do you think have been the most important? If so, can you explain why you say that?

Changes include:

Provision of additional enrichment activities to support well-being and/or engagement with the programme

Learning Unit Cost Recovery

Widening range of Get Ready activities available to young people

Increasing the rate of training allowance

Reimbursement of the costs of one meal for participants

Availability of Level 2 qualifications through advancement strand delivery

Extension of age of enrolment to 19

16. How have you managed relationships with your local JGW+ Contractor and/or their Sub-Contractors?

a. Can you give any examples of these at all?

b. Is there any way in which these relationships could be enhanced or improved?

i. Is there a role for the Welsh Government in this at all? If so, what could that role involve?

17. Is there anything further that you would like to add or feel is important to the evaluation?

## **Annexe I – Discussion Guide – Interviews with Welsh Government JGW+ Staff**

Questions for discussion

### **Introduction**

1. Please can you introduce yourself and your role in relation to JGW+?

### **Engagement and provision of support**

2. Generally, how effective has the referral approach been in attracting and engaging young people in JGW+? Please consider this in terms of (a) the referral of customers to the service by Working Wales, (b) other third parties such as local authority EPC contacts, and (c) direct-referral.
  - a. How have these approaches changed since JGW+ started in April 2022?
  - b. How successful are these different methods?
  - c. Is this approach consistent across Wales?
  - d. Are there any areas that need further development from a Welsh Government perspective?
3. How was the JGW+ assessment process designed to ensure that young people can be successfully and effectively supported?
  - a. What feedback have you had from Contractors regarding how this assessment process seems to be working?
  - b. Do you think that the assessment process could be enhanced or improved in any way?
4. How is the well-being of young people being assessed, specifically issues of life satisfaction, anxiety, perceptions of being worthwhile, and happiness?
  - a. What was the purpose of this assessment?
  - b. What feedback have you had from contractors regarding how this part of the assessment process seems to be working?
  - c. What kind of support is this identifying that young people need?
  - d. Do you think that it could be enhanced or improved in any way?

5. How well do you think that the needs assessment approach is enabling Contractors to accurately allocate a young person to a JGW+ support strand?
  - a. Do there seem to be any differences between the three support strands?
  - b. Do you have any good or bad examples of how this has worked out?
  - c. In light of these examples, are there any changes that you think could be made to needs assessment that might improve the allocation process?
  
6. Is 'dropout' by young people, at any stage in JGW+ provision, an issue? Is there any variance in this by different support strand?
  - a. If so, what improvements or changes could be implemented to reduce those leaving JGW+ support before their support programme is complete/outcomes have been achieved?
  
7. How has the JGW+ service been designed to ensure that those accessing the service in the Welsh language are given equal opportunities and access to training through the medium of Welsh?
  - a. Was a budget assigned for this work?
  - b. Was an Accessibility / Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Audit for this group conducted?
  - c. Have there been any challenges to providing support for this group?
  
8. How has the JGW+ service been designed to ensure that those accessing the service from Black, Asian or minority ethnic groups are given equal opportunities and access to training that is culturally appropriate to their needs?
  - a. Was a budget assigned for this work?
  - b. Was an Accessibility / Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Audit for this group conducted?
  - c. Have there been any challenges to providing support for this group?

9. How has the JGW+ service been designed to ensure that those accessing the service from LGBTQI+ communities are given equal opportunities and access to training?
- Was a budget assigned for this work?
  - Was an Accessibility / Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Audit for this group conducted?
  - Have there been any challenges to providing support for this group?
10. How has the JGW+ service been designed to ensure that disabled people accessing the service are given equal opportunities and access to training?
- Was a budget assigned for this work?
  - Was an Accessibility / Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Audit conducted?
  - Have there been any challenges to providing support to disabled young people?  
PROBE: Provision for particular groups of disabled people — e.g. deaf and hard-of-hearing people, people with visual impairments.
11. How well does JGW+ delivery seek to ensure that it is up to date with the latest employment information, including engaging with employers, external stakeholders, and local labour market information?
- Are there any particular examples of this that you'd like to highlight?
  - How could this be improved at all?

## **Support strands**

12. Do you have any comments on delivery by each of the strands?
- Are any more difficult/challenging than others?
  - Are there any ways in which these strands could be refined or developed?

## **Outcomes**

13. How would you summarise the outcomes that JGW+ is generating for young people?
- How do these differ by support strand?

14. Is JGW+ helping young people to reach their employment goals?
- Why do you think that it is successful in this?
  - Where could JGW+ be improved to achieve more success?

### **Welsh Government programme management/support**

15. How would you describe the way in which the Welsh Government have managed relationships with JGW+ Contractors and/or their Sub-Contractors?
16. We're aware of some of the changes that the Welsh Government have made to the way in which JGW+ operates. Of those changes, which do you think have been the most important? If so, can you explain why you say that?

Changes include:

Provision of additional enrichment activities to support well-being and/or engagement with the programme

Learning Unit (LU) rate increase

Widening range of Get Ready activities available to young people

Increasing the rate of training allowance

Reimbursement of the costs of one meal for participants

Availability of Level 2 qualifications through advancement strand delivery

Extension of age of enrolment to 19

17. What would you say has been the key learning from JGW+ delivery so far?

18. Is there anything further that you would like to add or feel is important to the evaluation?