

## CollegesWales Press Release

16 January 2024

**Embargoed until 00.01am 17 January 2024**

### Over 60 employers voice concern over potential cuts to apprenticeships

**Over 60 employers from across Wales have joined together to call for funding for the Welsh Government flagship apprenticeship programme to be protected, to ensure the economic prosperity of Wales.**

In an open letter, employers say that cuts to the apprenticeship programme announced by Welsh Government on 19 December 2023 will have a devastating effect on apprentices, employers, and communities, signalling very challenging times ahead for the FE and work-based learning sectors. It could mean **10,000 fewer apprentices able to start next year**, with the reductions falling disproportionately on young people, and those in the lowest socio-economic groups.

ColegauCymru has previously highlighted concern about the impact of potential reduced budgets across both apprenticeships and the wider FE offer.

**Reacting to the Welsh Government's draft budget, ColegauCymru Chief Executive, David Hagendyk, said,**

*"As Wales navigates turbulent economic times, colleges are the skills engine needed to drive our economic recovery, and it is critical that future inward investment is not damaged. The draft budget is a huge gamble for Wales' economy and communities. The Welsh Government must think again and reverse the catastrophic decision to cut the apprenticeship programme."*

Further education colleges are fundamental to a fairer, greener and stronger Wales, but they need sustainable funding to be able to support learners and to deliver for employers. The combination of the cuts to the apprenticeship budget and reductions in funding elsewhere mean there is a perfect storm facing the sector as a result of the proposals in the draft budget.

-ENDS-

---

### Notes for Editors

[Employer Open Letter and list of signatories](#) Deep cuts to apprenticeship programme will undermine new economic mission and cut talent pipeline for employers.

On Wednesday 17 January 2024 Plaid Cymru have secured a debate in the Senedd on apprenticeships - [Agenda for Plenary on Wednesday, 17 January 2024, 13.30 \(senedd.wales\)](#) (Item 7)

[Draft budget announcement “devastating blow to apprentices, employers and communities”](#)

19 December 2023

[Employer representatives voice concern over potential cuts to apprenticeships](#)

18 December 2023

## Welsh Government Policy and Strategy

[Draft Budget 2024 to 2025](#)

ColegauCymru. The voice of further education in Wales.

We are an education charity which promotes the public benefit of further education in Wales. We believe that all learners have the right to world-class education, delivered in a safe, diverse and inclusive setting and within a sector which supports the wider community, employers and the economy.

We also convene the *Further Education Principals’ Forum*, which represents the interests of further education (FE) providers.

We undertake research and policy development and provide practical support to the FE community. Working closely with Welsh Government, their agencies, and other stakeholders, we help shape policies affecting the FE sector, their learners and staff.

ColegauCymru is the first point of contact for further education in Wales.

## Our Members

Coleg Gwent	<a href="http://www.coleggwent.ac.uk">www.coleggwent.ac.uk</a>
Adult Learning Wales	<a href="http://www.adultlearning.wales">www.adultlearning.wales</a>
Cardiff and Vale College	<a href="http://www.cavc.ac.uk">www.cavc.ac.uk</a>
Coleg y Cymoedd	<a href="http://www.cymoedd.ac.uk">www.cymoedd.ac.uk</a>
The College Merthyr Tydfil	<a href="http://www.merthyr.ac.uk">www.merthyr.ac.uk</a>
Bridgend College	<a href="http://www1.bridgend.ac.uk">www1.bridgend.ac.uk</a>
Gower College Swansea	<a href="http://www.gcs.ac.uk">www.gcs.ac.uk</a>
NPTC Group of Colleges	<a href="http://www.nptcgroup.ac.uk">www.nptcgroup.ac.uk</a>
Coleg Sir Gâr	<a href="http://www.colegsirgar.ac.uk">www.colegsirgar.ac.uk</a>
Pembrokeshire College	<a href="http://www.pembrokeshire.ac.uk">www.pembrokeshire.ac.uk</a>
Coleg Ceredigion	<a href="http://www.ceredigion.ac.uk">www.ceredigion.ac.uk</a>
Grŵp Llandrillo Menai	<a href="http://www.gllm.ac.uk">www.gllm.ac.uk</a>
Coleg Cambria	<a href="http://www.cambria.ac.uk">www.cambria.ac.uk</a>

Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

<https://www.colegcymraeg.ac.uk/en/>

## Contact Us

Lucy Hopkins, **Communications Manager**

[Lucy.Hopkins@ColegauCymru.ac.uk](mailto:Lucy.Hopkins@ColegauCymru.ac.uk) | 07932 545 456 | 029 2052 8391

[www.colegau.cymru](http://www.colegau.cymru) | [www.twitter.com/colegaucymru](https://www.twitter.com/colegaucymru)

