

# Next generation of train drivers sign up to Transport for Wales apprenticeship scheme

November 24, 2021



The next generation of train drivers have signed-up to Transport for Wales' (TfW) new apprenticeship scheme – the first of its kind in Wales.

TfW has become the first train operator in the UK to offer an accredited NVQ level 3 qualification in train driver operations as part of its apprenticeship.

It hopes to have more than 100 apprentices signed-up by the end of the year and aims to recruit around 100 every year over the next five years.

Adam Bagwell, Operations Training Manager at Transport for Wales, said: "I am absolutely proud and delighted we are now able to offer a recognised level 3 qualification and apprenticeship for train drivers for the very first time in Wales.

"This has been a long time coming and the hard work from our training team in partnership with the Rail Delivery Group's (RDG) train driver academy, Coleg y Cymoedd and the national Trade Union for Train Drivers, ASLEF, has now come to fruition.

“The train driver’s role is a professional, highly skilled job and our drivers deserve the recognition for their hard work through training in the form of this qualification. It shows we are committed to provide the best possible training to our drivers in Wales and the boarders.”

Deputy Minister for Climate Change with responsibility for Transport, Lee Waters, said: “The creation of Transport for Wales was not just about improving public transport but to bring other benefits to our communities as we do so. Bringing on apprentices into well paid jobs is a great example of how we are doing both.”

The first eight drivers to join the apprenticeship are Kevin Whitlock, Drew Bradley, Robyn Williams, Richard Lee Hext, Joel David Hier, Rhys William, Stephen Edward Jones and Michael Davies.

Matthew Tucker, Assistant Principal – Business Services at Coleg y Cymoedd said: “Coleg y Cymoedd are delighted to work in partnership with TFW by supporting the development of the first Level 3 Train Driver apprenticeship in Wales. We have been working with TFW for almost 2 years, supporting upskilling and training across various departments. The Train Driver Level 3 is the first in Wales and generates new opportunities and ensures consistency across the UK.

“There has been huge infrastructure investment and development in transportation across Wales, creating this apprenticeship ensures education and skills development forms a critical part.”

TfW has invested heavily in its training facilities including new train and platform simulators and all its driver trainers have recently started or completed an NVQ level 3 qualification in learning and development.

Mick Whelan, general secretary of ASLEF, the train drivers’ union, added: “We are thrilled the first ever accredited qualification in train driving, in Wales, is finally in place.

“It’s a great step forward for training, for train drivers, for the railway, and for Wales.”

*Photo credit: Transport for Wales*