

Minister highlights alternative career options as thousands collect their GCSE results

The Welsh Government supports apprenticeships from level 2 through to higher levels. Last week the Minister visited IT Pie in Penarth to speak with one of the company's apprentices, Jaimie Warburton, and Creative Director, Aran Pitter, to hear more about why apprenticeships work for them, from both a learner and business perspective.

Jaimie, now 28 and from Caerphilly, outlined that he always had an interest in IT and web development but after leaving school at 16 he initially struggled to find his vocation.

After working as an IT support officer at a variety of different businesses, Jaimie became despondent about his career and craved the opportunity to get his foot in the door of a web design company, however without any formal qualifications in web development or relevant work experience he struggled to secure a job.

He decided to go freelance for a short period of time in order to gain some experience and before long came across the opportunity to do a Level 4 apprenticeship in Front-End Web Development with IT Pie in Penarth.

He explained that the application process was very simple and he was lucky enough to be successful. Now twelve months on, thanks to IT Pie, Sgil Cymru and the Welsh Government, Jaimie is on the road to completing his apprenticeship and in the next few weeks he will become a fully-qualified web developer with a bright and prosperous future ahead of him.

Commenting on why an apprenticeship was the best route for him, Jaimie said:

"The course has been absolutely brilliant. I have received so much support and guidance from my colleagues who have taught me all the technical terms and language. It's been great to be able to apply everything I'm learning at college to real-life situations every day.

"I will finish my apprenticeship in September and become a fully-qualified web developer. I feel like my career is finally taking off.

"I'd definitely recommend doing an apprenticeship. I didn't even think they were available in things like web design. I thought you had to go to university to work in web development and coding, but that's not the case. It's been a brilliant way of gaining hands-on practical experience as well as all the relevant skills and qualifications. For me, an apprenticeship is a quicker way to get

straight into the job you want.”

Highlighting why apprenticeships work for IT Pie, Aran Pitter said: “In our line of work – web development and design – technologies are constantly evolving so it is vital we stay ahead of the curve and remain current. The skills and on the job training our apprentices learn are shaped by business needs which makes this type of learning and development relevant to the individual and our company.

“Jaimie is an asset to IT Pie and has really hit the ground running. Over the last ten years we have taken on a number of apprentices and apart from one all of them continued to work for us after qualifying.

“The great thing about taking on an apprentice is that you can take someone from ground level, mould their learning and development around the needs of the company and its clients and this not only supports business growth but it enables the apprentice to develop skills that are relevant to real-life.”

Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James, added:

“Jaimie is just one example of someone who has a thriving career after securing an apprenticeship. It highlights just how valuable it is to gain practical, on the job experience and how it can provide them with all the skills and qualifications they need to have a rewarding and fruitful career. ”

“Apprenticeships are the start of an exciting and rewarding career and can benefit anyone of any age, giving them an opportunity to gain practical, on the job experience while gaining all the skills and qualifications they need.

“Apprenticeships are a key investment for employers who can train their workforce in the specialist skills they need within their organisation. Overall, apprenticeships play an important role in increasing the nation’s overall skill set and driving economic growth, making sure that Wales remains competitive on the world stage.”

For more information about becoming an apprentice, visit careerswales.com and follow the apprenticeship link or to find out how your business could benefit from recruiting an apprentice, visit [Skills Gateway for Business](#), or call 03000 6 03000. Also find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/apprenticeshipscymru and on Twitter @apprenticewales.

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