

FE and WBL Silhouettes

Background

During 2021-22, Welsh Government commissioned the EWC to produce a series of 'silhouettes' that set out job roles/levels within the post-16 workforce (FE and WBL). The purpose of the silhouettes being to outline what model post-holders (working in different roles within FE and WBL) might look like, in terms of their skills, experience and qualifications, providing a valuable developmental resource for practitioners and stakeholders.

Development

A key priority, from the outset of the project, was that the development of the silhouettes should take place collaboratively, in partnership with representatives from the FE and WBL sectors.

Before commencing the work, the project team met individually with key stakeholders to outline the project and gather views on the most appropriate approach to developing the silhouettes. Following these discussions it was agreed that the members of the Welsh Government's Post-16 Workforce Development Steering Group would nominate FE and WBL practitioners to be part of a Task and Finish Group. The group would be responsible for developing the silhouettes, including agreeing the design and content and which roles were to be included.

A Task and Finish Group was established which was made up of a range of FE and WBL practitioners, as well as representation from UCU. The group was chaired by Professor Bill Lucas (Professor of Learning and Director of the Centre for Real-World Learning (CRL), University of Winchester).

Over the course of six meetings of the Task and Finish Group (between June 2021 and March 2022) sixteen silhouettes were developed which covered a range of roles in FE and WBL. These are attached at Annex A.

Purpose and use of the silhouettes

It is intended that the silhouettes will help those working within the sector to better understand the nature and complexity of different roles and to develop a clearer understanding of career progression by mapping out some of the specific qualities that allow individuals to excel in different positions.

We hope the silhouettes will be of interest to a range of different people from both within and outside the post-16 sector, including:

- individuals currently working within the sector, at all levels
- people who are interested in careers within FE and WBL
- students
- parents

The silhouettes could potentially be used in a variety of ways, to help inspire practitioners to fulfil their potential, in terms of:

- providing a tool to aid self-reflection
- helping practitioners to shape their professional learning pathways, through providing a clear benchmark for training and qualifications, to guide CPD

- as a resource, for those within or outside the sector, seeking to develop or advance their careers within FE and WBL - helping them to better understand the nature of different roles, for example:
 - a school teacher that is interested in moving into the FE sector
 - an FE learning support worker seeking to understand their pathway to becoming an FE teacher
 - an FE lecturer with ambitions of becoming a head of department or a Principal
 - a WBL assessor who wishes to understand how they can progress into a management role
- allowing individuals to assess their suitability for particular roles and the nature of any professional development activity that they may need to undertake, or further experience they may need to acquire
- helping employers to think about the nature of the roles that they are recruiting for and what the profile of an ideal candidate might look like
- potentially supporting Welsh Government in establishing national, accredited programmes of professional learning and development to help practitioners on their career pathway

Next steps

The draft silhouettes were submitted to Welsh Government in April 2022. Following discussion with officials, it was agreed that the next steps would be to test the silhouettes with a wider group of stakeholders and practitioners, as whilst the silhouettes were developed with representatives from the FE and WBL sector, the Task and Finish Group only consisted of a small number of participants.

The purpose of the testing will be to ensure the content of the draft silhouettes accurately reflects the roles, is sufficient to meet the purpose of the silhouettes and that there is a shared understanding of the purpose of the silhouettes.

At this stage, we would invite you to review the silhouettes provided at Annex A and provide feedback to the EWC on:

- 1) whether the silhouettes provide an accurate representation of the roles outlined
- 2) whether the information included within the silhouettes is accurate (particularly in relation to qualifications and salary ranges)
- 3) whether the silhouettes as drafted meet the purpose outlined above

Feedback can be provided via the JTUs, or directly by email to research@ewc.wales. We would be grateful if this could be provided to us by Friday, 28 October 2022.

Thank you in advance for your support with this project. If you have any queries please contact research@ewc.wales / 029 2046 0099.