

# CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

# A meeting of the CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

will be held at the Council Chamber, The Pavillions, Clydach Vale, CF40 2XX / HYBRID
MONDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2023 at 2.00 PM

Contact: Sarah Daniel Sarah.Daniel@rctcbc.gov.uk

Non Committee Members and Members of the public may request the facility to address the Committee at their meetings on the business listed although facilitation of this request is at the discretion of the Chair. It is kindly asked that such notification is made by 16.03.2023 on the contact details listed above, including stipulating whether the address will be in Welsh or English.

### LIST OF ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

### 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive disclosures of personal interest from Members in accordance with the Code of Conduct Note:

- 1. Members are requested to identify the item number and subject matter that their interest relates to and signify the nature of the personal interest: and
- 2. Where Members withdraw from a meeting as a consequence of the disclosure of a prejudicial interest they must notify the Chairman when they leave.

### 3. MINUTES

To receive for approval the minutes of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 10 February 2023

(Pages 3 - 4)

### 4. VENTURE GRADUATES UPDATE

To scrutinise and challenge the scale up of the Venture Graduate

(Pages 5 - 28)

### 5. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, is of the opinion should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

**Director of Democratic Services & Communication** 

Circulation:-

**Councillors:** Councillor A Whitcombe (Chair), Councillor R Bevan (Vice-Chair),

Councillor M Cross, Councillor P Davies, Councillor S Garratt, Councillor P Hourahine, Councillor D Isaac, Councillor S Perkes,

Councillor P Wong and Councillor N Yeowell

Officers: Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services &

Communication

Ms K Beirne, Director Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

Ms N Sommerville, Head of Business Development & Growth

Ms S Daniel, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### Agenda Item 3



#### RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL

Minutes of the Virtual meeting of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Friday, 10 February 2023 at 10.00 am.

### County Borough Councillors – Cardiff Capital Region City Deal Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members were present:-

Councillor A Whitcombe (Caerphilly CBC) (Chair)

Councillor R Bevan Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC

Councillor P Davies Bridgend CBC
Councillor S Garratt Monmouthshire CC

Councillor P Hourahine Newport CBC

Councillor D Isaac Merthyr Tydfil CBC
Councillor S Perkes Vale of Glamorgan CBC

Councillor P Wong
Councillor L Dymock
Councillor S Griffiths
Councillor S Griffiths
Councillor S Griffiths
Councillor S Griffiths
Cardiff Council
Monmouthshire CC
Councillor S Griffiths

Councillor O Jones Cardiff Council

#### Officers in attendance

Mr C Hanagan, Service Director of Democratic Services & Communication
Ms K Beirne, Director Cardiff Capital Region City Deal
Ms N Sommerville, Head of Business Development & Growth
Mrs S Daniel, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Mrs J Daniel, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

### 11 Welcome and Apologies

The Chairman welcomed officers Kellie Beirne, Nicola Somerville and Christian Cadwallader from the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal office to the meeting.

Apologies for Absence were received from Cllr S Powderhill and Councillor N Yeowell

#### 12 Declarations of Interest

None received

### 13 Minutes

**RESOLVED**: to approve the minutes of the CCRCD Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 27<sup>th</sup> October as an accurate record of the meeting

#### 14 Information Items

**RESOLVED**: Members noted the items

### 15 TO CONSIDER PASSING THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public be excluded from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act (as amended) for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of the exempt information as defined in paragraph 14 of Part 4 of the Schedule 12A of the Act".

### 16 CCR Energy Limited

The Director CCRCD presented the report to Members of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) of the principles behind the establishment of CCR Energy Limited and the associated activity surrounding the acquisition of the former Aberthaw Power Station in the Vale of Glamorgan

Following discussion on the **exempt** item it was **RESOLVED** to note the report and receive further reports and updates on the masterplan as appropriate

### 17 Urgent Items

None received

Councillor A Whitcombe Chair.



# CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 March 2023

### **VENTURE GRADUATE UPDATE**

### **REPORT OF CCR SKILLS & TALENT LEAD**

### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide the JOSC with the opportunity to scrutinise and challenge the scale up of the Venture Graduate Scheme, that forms part of the Future Ready Skills Framework (FRSF), approved in March 2020.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

2.1 Scrutinise the contents of the report and associated appendices and identify further areas for consider by the JOSC, as the programme continues to grow & evolve.

### 3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Access to talent and skills development across the Region is a key lever for inward investment and creating prosperous communities. Regional Cabinet recognise the benefits of having a skilled talent pool available to support economic activity across the geography, as well as recognising the benefits of creating a supportive environment to retain talented people in sustainable careers within our SME community and priority clusters.



- 3.2The Venture Graduate Scheme meets the vision of the Future Ready Skills Frameworks' vision by reducing the 'brain-drain' from the Region, developing a talent pool of gifted graduates to support indigenous business growth.
- 3.3 The Scheme fully aligns with the FRSF's vision of leveraging the potential and impact of CCRCD investments and programmes in creating an inclusive and entrepreneurial future-orientated system for jobs and skills.
- 3.4 Despite a slow performance since the pilot, due to a combination of internal and external factors including internal resourcing & direction, Covid-19, Brexit, the Venture Graduate Scheme is fast becoming the "Go To" professional graduate recruitment solution for CCR businesses in the region.

### 3.5 **Venture Performance**

To date, the programme has created 160 graduate jobs, supporting 460 businesses, and has generated £4,409,769 private sector investment against costs of £923,591.02, representing £4.77 for every CCR £1 invested. The table below demonstrates Venture's performance since scheme inception.

Year		Businesses engaged	Vacancies advertised	Jobs Withdrawn	Jobs Created	PSI
1	2019/20	212	58	29	27	£744,674
2	2020/21	92	52	30	28	£575,810
3	2021/22	44	61	7	31	£1,624,428
4	2022/23	112	123	16	52	£1,464,769
Total		460	294	82	160	£4.409m

### **4 VENTURE - PAST**



- 4.1 Regional Cabinet approved the pilot scheme in December 2018. The objective of the scheme was to reverse 'brain-drain' with around 35% of all graduates leaving the region to seek employment opportunities elsewhere each year.
- 4.2 The scheme works with businesses that historically, have had little or no engagement with the graduate market; to help them compete with corporates for talent and support their resourcing, growth, and resilience.
- 4.3 The scheme operates in collaboration spanning the University of South Wales, Cardiff University, Cardiff Metropolitan University, and the Open University, as well as business groups and trade bodies.
- 4.4 A review of progress (in 2019), lessons learned and scope for the future, was presented to Cabinet in December 2019, with a proposal to extend the pilot into a continuation period to fully build upon and optimise progress made. Cabinet believed that the review showed sufficient scope and promise to move beyond a continuation period and requested to receive a case for rapid deployment of a programme-level in March 2020.
- 4.5 Year one of the programme saw fifty unique establishments advertising posts with twenty-seven graduates placed and more following in quick succession. The initial model was based upon a demand led approach where vacancies were advertised as when they became available. It was soon realised that this approach was resource intensive, therefore a review was instigated to provide guidance on more suitable delivery models.
- 4.6 The initial programme generated £540,988 in private leverage (based on an annual salary rate) and with on-costs of 30% equates to £702,284. Based on costs invested in the pilot, this represented £5.80 for every CCR £1 invested.
- 4.7 The Business case to roll out the programme until March 2024 has a target of advertising five hundred positions for the Region. This led to a significant change in the delivery and operating model, with a rebrand to "Venture Graduates".
- 4.8 The 'Venture' Skills hub was launched in September 2021. The platform provides a landing page for all skills related activity across the City Deal, including 'Venture Graduate.'

### 5 VENTURE - PRESENT

5.1 During **2022/23**, the Venture team has significantly strengthened business and university engagement, implemented best practice, modern recruitment processes and automation and developed a unique, future thinking graduate



development programme that can be seen as a flagship programme for the region.

- 5.2 **SME** / Cluster Focussed Venture has realigned strategic direction towards supporting CCR priority SMEs & clusters across the region in Fintech, MedTech, Cyber, Creative, Semiconductors & Net Zero businesses.
  - We are working proactively with Fintech Wales, Technology Connected, Media Cymru, Manufacturing Wales, Cyber Innovation Hub, CS Connected, the FSB, Chambers Wales, regional Business Clubs and Business Wales to promote the graduate offer across members. Venture have developed a **Guide to Hiring A Graduate** which can be viewed at **Appendix A.**
- 5.3 **Speed of Delivery** Investment in an AI driven hiring platform and CRM has significantly speeded up the process of "advert to graduate hire". The recruitment process can now be completed within 4 weeks (as opposed to previous 8 weeks) and provides the opportunity for bespoke online testing, for example C#, both of which are highly beneficial to SMEs.
- 5.4 **Agility** to enable a more flexible response to business needs, Venture now offers a year-round recruitment service, moving away from the previous, more rigid cohort model, which previously deterred many businesses unable to wait for cohort launches.
- 5.5 **New, Bespoke Graduate Development** to effectively support ongoing graduate development, an innovate new <u>Career Accelerator Programme</u> (CAP) has been developed, replacing the poorly taken up ILM qualification. The CAP model allows a current and bespoke development programme, better aligned to supporting competences and skills required for graduate's roles, via the choice of two current pathways:
  - Pathway 1: a 6–8-month programme in core Professional & Transferable Skills incorporating a series of Masterclasses, delivered by University of South Wales, in Critical Thinking, Data for Transformation, Influencing for Impact, Introduction to Agile Project Management and Cyber Essentials.
  - Pathway 2: a 10-12 week, intensive, Open University Microcredential, offering a choice of skill areas in <u>Leadership and Management</u> | <u>Computing and Digital Technologies</u> | <u>Environment</u>, <u>Climate Change and Sustainability</u> |
- 5.6 "Always On" Learning & Welsh Language all graduates benefit from access to wraparound learning across any skillset, via the Open University's Open Learn Venture Portal, alongside the opportunity to learn the Welsh language at any level, via a new partnership with Learn Welsh Cardiff.



There is a growing sense of a Venture Graduate Community as graduates come together for Masterclasses and Events, which is particularly important for graduates working on their own in SMEs or working remotely, thus encouraging retention, and supporting wellbeing.









5.7 **Increased Social Media Presence** – Venture's social media presence has gained significant traction and 1430 LinkedIn followers. Venture content is regularly shared & promoted by partner organisations, reaching the graduate population and business community. The Venture LinkedIn profile can be viewed here.



### 5.8 Venture Highlights: 2022 / 2023.

- Supporting CCR SMEs **75% of business supported are SMEs** in line with it's original ambitions.
- Reducing brain drain 59% of employed graduates originate from CCR universities, whilst the programme has created jobs for 41% graduates relocating from outside the region.
- Actively supporting a wide range of high growth / scale up businesses across CCR priority clusters, including Yoello, TraKcel, Sonovate, Pure Cyber, Space Forge, LCB, Spire Renewables, STG Aerospace, Panasonic, Biocatalysts etc.
- **Thirty percent** of graduate jobs are female, further work is required in 23/24, to increase gender balance, particularly across STEM roles via effective showcasing of role models, case studies, videos etc.
- Venture Student Ambassadors: Venture are trialling a student ambassador initiative, with University of South Wales, whereby ambassadors actively promote Venture, attend Careers Fairs etc within their university.





### 6. VENTURE INTO THE FUTURE

6.1 Increasing business referrals from LAs - there is a clear need to ensure distributed impact across the CCR, therefore, Venture will engage proactively with LAs across the region, to stimulate business referrals and encourage Authorities to better utilise Venture to support their graduate recruitment needs. We would welcome discussions around the development of a CCR Local Authority Venture Graduate Scheme.

To date, Monmouthshire and Torfaen Council have appointed graduates through the Scheme and we are in discussions with Bridgend Council to enable their recent graduates to benefit from the Career Accelerator Programme, and support future graduate recruitment. We will seek to liaise with each of the Local Authorities to better promote the offer.

- 6.2 Inclusion: Whilst Venture attracts a high proportion of BAME & international graduate applicants (49%), only 15% BAME graduates have secured jobs to date. As a result, Venture is about to promote a new & innovative partnership with Newfields Law, to guide SMEs in relation to Right to Work, Visas etc and demystify the process of recruiting international graduates, thus encouraging CCR businesses to access a wider, diverse graduate talent pool.
- 6.3 Develop new CAP pathways in Digital, Data, Sales & Business Development & Net Zero. We are effectively leveraging Welsh Government (Personal Learning Account) funding to maximise the scope of the Programme, both financially and to agilely respond to industry needs.
- 6.4 An impartial, external evaluation is underway via Darogan Talent (completion end of March 2023) to determine Venture's key strengths, impact and highlight past weaknesses and factors that have impacted performance to date. This will enable CCR to appraise the need, impact and to consider future strategic direction, innovation, opportunities for expansion, investment, and delivery models for the Scheme.

#### 7. APPENDICES

The following reports are attached for member's consideration:

Appendix A: Venture Guide to Hiring a Graduate

### 8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS



8.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising from this report and no Equality Impact Assessment is deemed necessary for the purposes of this report.

### 9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no financial implications in relation to this report.

### 10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

10.1 There are no Legal Implications in relation to this report.

# Your Guide To Hiring A Graduate

# venture

GRADUATES

Skills and Talent Hub of the Cardiff Capital Region www.venturewales.org



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"I don't have time to hire or train someone up.
I need someone with experience to hit the
ground running now."



The '*right*' Graduate can transform your business.

# Let us show you how...

Many enterprises think that hiring a graduate would be too daunting an experience - and wouldn't be '*right*' for their business.

Venture can show you how the 'right' graduate can play a valuable role in your team, from Day One. And we'll even recruit and help train that graduate for you, **for free**.

# THE TOP 5 BENEFITS OF HIRING A GRADUATE.

There are many ways in which a graduate will help improve your business. Here are the top five proven reasons why you should hire a graduate:

# 1 Fresh Thinking & Inspired Ideas

If the pandemic taught us anything, it's the importance of being able to adapt and spot the emerging opportunities of a new business landscape. Graduates bring a fresh outlook and innovative ideas. All you have to do is provide a safe place for honest and open discussions - involving them in the challenges and opportunities of your business.

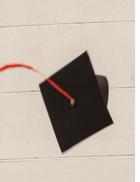
# 2 New Skills & Valuable Competencies

Many of today's graduates are surprisingly well-skilled, ready to hit the ground running, with a firm foundation of competencies, ranging from digital competency to well developed human skills. They'll augment and align with the skill sets in your current team (and may even help improve them).

# **3** Future Proof your Business

Graduates very often prove to be the Future Leaders of a business - and our unique 12 month Career Accelerator Programme will help that happen. Designed with the graduate AND your business development in mind, our programme offers two pathways to choose from, delivered by University of South Wales and the Open University Cymru.

Download the prospectus from the Career Accelerator page on our website to see just how exceptional this programme is - and how it can empower your graduate future proof your business



# 4

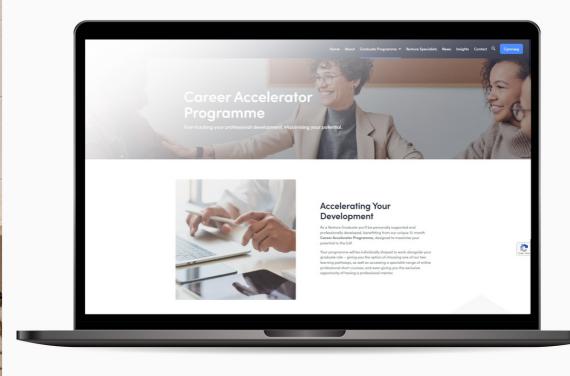
### **Hunger for Knowledge**

Graduates have an abundance of motivation and an infectious enthusiasm when they start their career. They have a hunger for knowledge and a thirst to succeed. What better way to remind yourself of how amazing your business and successes are, than teaching someone your processes? Fall back in love with your business today!

# 5

### **Return on Investment**

Making your business better - and getting a return on your investment - is the ultimate KPI for hiring a Graduate. We understand that. Our end-to-end zero-cost recruitment and development service includes a thorough screening process that will match the right candidate for your business, geared to giving you a return on your investment, as that graduate evolves to become an integral member of your team.



# Career Accelerator Programme

Fast-tracking your professional development. Maximising your potential.

# When is the right time?

The timeline is key when recruiting a graduate - and our expert recruiters will guide you on the most effective time of the year to advertise your graduate job roles.

Our team continuously monitor the trends and analytics of when graduates are searching for jobs online - and here are some insights into the most popular months when graduates are conducting their job search:

### JANUARY/FEBRUARY

The number of graduates looking for a job role increases after graduation ceremonies are held in January, with a flurry of activity in late January and early February.

### **APRIL/MAY**

There's another spike in Graduate job searches in April/May, as undergraduates look to see what jobs are 'out there' for when they graduate in July. It's worth remembering that when advertising in this period, the Graduates may not be ready to start the job until July.

### **JULY/AUGUST**

This is our most popular time of year to receive applications. Most candidates will have graduated in July and are looking to start their careers in September/October, making this the prime time to advertise your graduate job role.



# And end-to-end service that ends in your success.

Venture Graduates provide an end-to-end Recruitment & Development Service for **ZERO** cost. There is no catch! Our business team works closely with you to find the right candidate for your business.

## The Process:

### Step 1 (Employer)

Simply contact our business team at venturebusinesses@cardiff.gov.uk

### Step 2 (Employer)

Our team will discuss the role and job description in detail - ensuring we have all the information we need to create a compelling job advertisement for you and your graduate role.

### Step 3 (Venture)

Our expert copywriter will transform your job description into a dazzling job ad, to attract as many candidates as possible from our wide talent pool.

### Step 4 (Venture)

Once you are happy with the ad, we'll distribute it on all platforms, job boards and University networks.

### Step 5 (Venture)

Our team will assess and shortlist the Candidate CVs, via our state-of-theart recruitment system.

### Step 6 (Venture)

The shortlisted candidates will then be sent through to online testing, having agreed with you the tests needed.

### Step 7 (Venture)

Successful applicants from the testing will go through to their 1st interview with our recruitment team.

### Step 8 (Venture)

From the results of the first interview, our team will shortlist and send you the candidate details and test results, via our recruitment system.

### Step 9 (Employer)

A final interview with you and the candidates will result in you appointing your perfect Graduate.



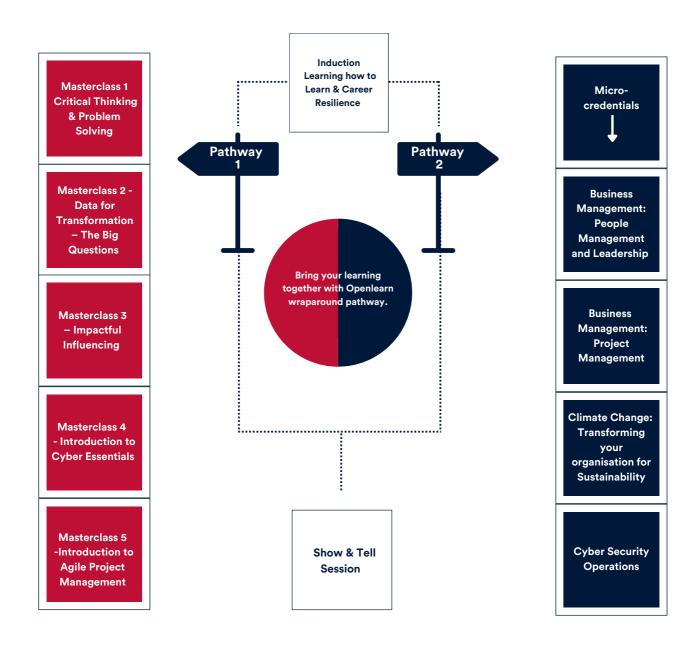


"Can't recommend Venture Graduates enough, complete support on our recent recruitment drive resulting in two excellent new team members."

Huw Williams - UK Analytics

# Step 10 Career Accelerator Programme

Your chosen Graduate will be invited to enrol on our unique 12 month learning and support programme. The Career Accelerator Programme is designed around the individual needs of graduates, and shaped to work alongside the graduate's job - accelerating their progress and realising their potential!



The Programme offers your graduate a choice of two learning pathways - Masterclasses and Microcredentials - covering everything from Career Resilience, Critical Thinking & Cyber, to People Management, Agile Project Management & Climate Change.

All delivered in expert partnership with the Open University Cymru & The University of South Wales - and backed by the Venture "Triple A" Pledge of being Available, Approachable & Adaptable to individual development needs 20



# Additional Offering Venture into the Welsh Language

We're thrilled to announce a collaboration between Venture Graduates and Dysgu Cymraeg Caerdydd / Learn Welsh Cardiff to promote the use of the Welsh language in the workplace.

We'll be offering Venture graduates the opportunity to learn Welsh and gain valuable language skills that will enhance their careers – giving our graduate employees a valuable language skill, and helping preserve and promote the Welsh language and culture.



This exciting new offering will be added as part of our Career Accelerator Programme – with five levels of language ability catered for – so whether you're a complete beginner or a fluent Welsh speaker who may have lost a bit of linguistic confidence, this learning pathway is for you!

Leanna Davies, our Venture Graduate Development Officer, is delighted to be offering this new dimension to the Career Accelerator Programme (CAP):

"We're really excited to be adding this offering to the CAP as it's a great opportunity for people to learn Welsh and embrace a unique culture. We're also very happy to be collaborating with Learn Welsh Cardiff to make the Welsh language more accessible to our graduates – and hopefully increase the use of the language in the region"

We believe that the Welsh language should be celebrated – and it's never too late to learn something new – so we're fully on board with supporting the Welsh Government's ambitions of increasing the number of Welsh speakers. And that's why we'll be inviting and encouraging ALL Venture Graduates to enrol with Learn Welsh Cardiff. Don't miss out on this amazing opportunity to grow both professionally and personally!



# Did you know?

Recruitment of international workers is back on the agenda.

The confusion of Brexit and chaos caused by the pandemic has had a negative effect on recruiting talent from overseas. That's a potentially damaging situation as – sometimes – those skillsets are most appropriate for certain roles in an organisation, particularly when looking to attract graduate tech talent.

The good news is that the new rules and regulations governing the hiring of international workers are easily understood – and we have produced a practical guide for any employer looking to tap into the potential of international graduate talent, which can be found here: Employers: recruit the right talent through Right-to-Work - Venture (venturewales.org)

We have prepared a 10-point Checklist to help employers ensure they get it right on Right-to-Work.



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# The Venture 10-point Right-to-Work Checklist



(1)

Conduct your Right-To-Work checks on new hires at the earliest opportunity upon making a conditional offer and well before a new employee starts.



If possible, arrange for a new employee to come in before their first day - to meet your team and also bring the essential documentation needed for a Right-to-Work check.



The Home Office requires you to obtain original documents from one of two lists. The first list is the candidate's passport, immigration status document, birth or adoption certificate, or certificate of naturalisation in the UK. The second list refers to documents showing your candidate's application to remain under immigration rules. The full lists are available at gov.uk.



Verify and make copies of the essential documents. These documents must be retained for prescribed periods. It's your responsibility to check that documents are genuine and that the prospective employee is the person presenting them - so you need to check that photographs are consistent across all documents and that they match the person's appearance. Make copies of those documents in a format that can't be manually altered - and securely diarise the dates of when those copies were made.

5

Double-check the details. Look for any evidence that the documents have been tampered with - and check any potential anomaly. Are there any differences in names across the documents that can't be explained (e.g. by marriage or divorce?). Have the expiry dates for permission to be in the UK passed?



Make sure you carry out follow-up checks on any employee with time-bound visas.



Ensure your team is trained to understand what process needs to be followed when hiring.



Create a guideline on how to conduct the Right-to-Work checks - have a protocol that everyone in your team adheres to.



Update your onboarding processes to reflect the new rules.



Include the Right-to-Work clause in employment contracts, so that the employment relationship can be terminated if an employee doesn't have the correct immigration permission to undertake the job in question.

# We have recruited over 150 Graduates across the Cardiff Capital Region.

#join The lenture

Don't just take our word for it..



Venture Graduates is a fantastic scheme for small businesses and candidates. It provided a supportive and encouraging environment for new talent and made it possible for us to recruit on a scale that would have been a massive distraction to our core business if we'd tried to do it alone.



Jess Lancashire - Venbridge Ltd















































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### GRADUATES

www.venturewales.org

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