



Director of Learning and Skills



Are you ready to shape the future of education and skills development in one of Wales' most vibrant communities? The Vale of Glamorgan Council is seeking a visionary leader to step into the role of Director of Learning and Skills. This is your chance to make a profound impact, drive innovation, and inspire positive change in the lives of every child and learner in the Vale of Glamorgan.

The Role:

As the Director of Learning and Skills, you'll be at the forefront of shaping the educational landscape and driving transformational change. From fulfilling statutory obligations to leading strategic initiatives, your role will be pivotal in ensuring excellence, equity, and inclusivity across all educational settings within the Vale of Glamorgan.

Key Responsibilities:

- Fulfil statutory requirements in compliance with the Education Act 1996.
- Provide strategic direction and guidance on education matters.
- Develop and maintain strong relationships with stakeholders.
- Lead the development and implementation of an innovative education and skills strategy.
- Foster a learner-focused, values-driven culture within the organisation.
- Champion diversity, equity, and inclusion within educational settings.
- Monitor educational standards and outcomes, fostering evidence-based improvement plans.
- Explore opportunities for collaboration and partnership working to improve service effectiveness and efficiency.

What We're Looking For:

We're seeking a dynamic leader with a passion for education and a track record of driving positive change. You'll have extensive experience in strategic leadership, stakeholder engagement, and organisational transformation. Your commitment to educational excellence, coupled with your ability to inspire and empower others, will be essential in this role.

Join us:

If you're ready to embark on a journey of innovation, collaboration, and impact, we want to hear from you. Join us in shaping the future of education in the Vale of Glamorgan and making a difference in the lives of our learners. Apply now to become our next Director of Learning and Skills!

Interviews will take place on 15th April 2024





About the Vale of Glamorgan Council

Welcome to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, a place where you can experience the perfect blend of a fulfilling work-life balance and a vibrant community. At the Vale of Glamorgan Council, we offer a rewarding work environment that aligns with our vision, culture, and values, while the county itself provides a backdrop of natural beauty, cultural heritage, and a strong sense of belonging.

As one of Wales's top-performing local authorities, we pride ourselves on innovation, resourcefulness, and dedication to our communities. With diverse communities, serene rural areas, and stunning coastline, every corner of the Vale is deserving of our attention and dedication.

Our Vale is a tapestry of diverse communities, each with its own unique educational aspirations and challenges. From bustling urban centres to picturesque rural villages and stunning coastal areas, we understand the importance of tailoring our educational initiatives to meet the diverse needs of our residents.

With a population exceeding 130,000 residents, our impact on education reaches every corner of the Vale of Glamorgan. Whether it's through our schools, youth services, or adult learning programs, we're dedicated to nurturing the potential of every individual and ensuring equal access to quality education for all.

Our team of over 5,000 staff members embodies the spirit of educational excellence in everything they do. From teachers and support staff to administrative professionals and community educators, each member of our team plays a vital role in shaping the future of our communities.

As an organisation, our mission is clear: to deliver outstanding educational services that empower our communities and drive sustainable economic growth. Guided by our Corporate Plan for 2020-2025, we are committed to four key Well-being Objectives that reflect our dedication to supporting learning, employment, and the overall well-being of our residents:

- 1. Working with and for our communities**
- 2. Supporting learning, employment, and sustainable economic growth**
- 3. Supporting people at home and in their community**
- 4. Respecting, enhancing, and enjoying our environment.**

As a public body, we take the long-term impact of our decisions seriously. By prioritising the well-being of future generations, we ensure that our educational initiatives not only meet the needs of today but also lay the foundation for a brighter, more prosperous tomorrow.



Our Values



Embracing Openness, Ambition, Togetherness, and Pride: Our Core Values at Vale of Glamorgan Council

At the Vale of Glamorgan Council, our values are not just words on a page—they are the pillars that guide our actions, decisions, and interactions. We wholeheartedly believe in being Open, Ambitious, Together, and Proud, and we embody these values in everything we do.

OPEN:

We foster an environment of transparency and accessibility. We believe in open communication, where ideas and information flow freely. We encourage dialogue, active listening, and constructive feedback. By being open, we create a culture that values diverse perspectives and promotes collaboration, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard.

AMBITIOUS:

We are forward thinking and seek to embrace new ways of working with our colleagues, partners, residents, and those who do business in the Vale of Glamorgan. We invest in our future, whether that is the skills of our workforce, the assets that we utilise or our relationships with others. We value the trust placed in us by our community and are ambitious to delivery excellence in all that we do on their behalf.

TOGETHER:

Collaboration is the cornerstone of our success. We believe that by working together, we achieve more. We foster a culture of teamwork, where individuals across departments and disciplines come together to tackle challenges, share knowledge, and leverage their collective strengths. This is especially important in Corporate Resources. We actively seek opportunities to collaborate with every part of the Council, including importantly with our schools, with our community, partners, and stakeholders, recognising that together, we can make a greater impact.

PROUD:

We take immense pride in serving the Vale of Glamorgan and its residents. We are proud of our achievements, the positive impact we make, and the dedication of our team. We celebrate our successes, both big and small, and recognise the efforts of our staff in delivering exceptional services. Our pride stems from our commitment to excellence, our contribution to the community, and our unwavering dedication to making a difference.

By embracing our values of Open, Ambitious, Together, and Proud, we cultivate a work environment that fosters trust, collaboration, and a sense of belonging. These values are not just for internal interactions — they extend to how we engage with everyone we work with. We are committed to upholding these values in all aspects of our work, ensuring that we build strong relationships based on integrity, respect, and shared achievements.

A Note from Rob Thomas

Chief Executive



The Vale of Glamorgan is a very special place on the South Wales coast with a reputation for excellence and innovation. Our vision for the Vale is 'Strong Communities with a bright future'. It is a vision that has stood us in good stead as we have transformed and continue to transform our organisation into one that is future fit and one that can serve all our residents to the very best of our ability.

With the retirement of the current post holder, the role of Director of Learning and Skills is an exciting opportunity to join the Council's Strategic Leadership team at a pivotal time. As we embark on the next phase of our transformation and reshaping programme there is much to do – many challenges but also many opportunities. We have also recently commenced the development of our new Corporate Plan for 2025-2030 and this role offers the perfect opportunity to influence the future policy direction of the organisation.

As current inspections of our Youth Service and that of the Local Education Authority draw to a conclusion, you will join at a time when there will be many strengths and positives to celebrate. But we are not complacent in the Vale – whilst there will be time for reflection we remain steadfast in the need to continually develop, improve and adapt for the benefit of all our residents and communities. Drive and desire are vital when it comes to our young people and learners and we are very proud of the ambitious way we have transformed the school estate in recent years through significant capital investment in new campuses and buildings. We are equally proud of the positive relationships we have with colleagues within all our schools and learning establishments – relationships which allow open discussion, challenge and debate.

Alongside myself as Chief Executive, you will join the Council's Strategic Leadership team as one of 5 Directors, statutory postholders and senior leads:

- Director of Corporate Resources – Tom Bowring
- Director of Social Services – Lance Carver
- Director of Environment and Housing – Miles Punter
- Director of Place – Marcus Goldsworthy
- Head of Legal and Democratic Services – Debbie Marles
- Head of Finance / Section 151 – Matt Bowmer
- Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development – Tracy Dickinson
- Head of Digital – Nickki Johns

If you share a vision for public service that can deliver 'Strong Communities with a Bright Future' then I would love to hear from you. Get in touch and let's have a conversation and see where it takes us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DR Thomas'.

Rob Thomas
Chief Executive

E-mail: drthomas@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk





Director of Learning and Skills

Role Profile

Job Title	Director of Learning and Skills	
Post Reference	Y-LS-AA002	
Grade	Director	
Directorate	Learning & Skills	
Location	Civic Offices, Barry and remote working	
Responsible to	Chief Executive	
Responsible for	Standards and Provision Additional Learning Needs and Wellbeing Strategy and Community Learning	
Role Overview	<p>We are seeking a visionary leader to take on the role of Director of Learning and Skills, shaping the future of education and skills development in our vibrant community, to ensure that every child has the best start. This is an opportunity to make a lasting impact, drive innovation, and inspire positive change in the lives of every child and learner in the Vale of Glamorgan.</p> <p>The Director of Learning and Skills is a pivotal leadership role within our Council, responsible for shaping the educational landscape and driving transformational change. This position combines statutory responsibilities under the Education Act 1996, with strategic leadership to propel the Vale toward excellence. As a key member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), you will champion our core values of Openness, Togetherness, Pride, and Ambition in all aspects of your work.</p>	
Our Values	Behaviour	What it means to us
AMBITIOUS	Forward thinking, embracing new ways of working and investing in our future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovation: The Director’s strategic leadership drives ambitious innovation, embracing transformative practices. ● Continuous Improvement: Ambition is reflected in the pursuit of continuous improvement, both for educators and learners. ● Visionary Leadership: By shaping the future of education, the Director embodies ambition.
OPEN	Open to different ideas and being accountable for the decisions we take.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Transparency: The Director ensures transparency in the decision-making processes, engaging with stakeholders openly. ● Inclusion: By championing diversity and equity, the Director creates an open and inclusive environment for all. ● Communication: Regular communication with staff, schools, and the community fosters openness and trust.



Director of Learning & Skills Role Profile (continued)

TOGETHER

Behaviour

Working together as a team that engages with our customers and partners, respects diversity and is committed to quality services.

What it means to us

- **Partnerships:** The Director collaborates with both internal and external stakeholders and partners to create seamless educational pathways.
- **Engagement:** Engaging with elected members, and senior officers across the Council and Schools, ensures collective decision-making and shared vision.
- **Community Involvement:** By involving the wider community, the Director strengthens collaboration.

PROUD

Proud to serve our communities and to be part of the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

- **Educational Excellence:** The Director takes pride in promoting educational excellence, ensuring high standards across all settings.
- **Student Achievement:** Celebrating student achievements and well-being reflects pride in their progress.
- **Advocacy:** Advocating for education at regional and national levels demonstrates pride in our educational system.


JOB DESCRIPTION

As the Director of Learning and Skills, you will:

Statutory Obligations:

- Fulfil the requirements of the role in compliance with statutory requirements and regulations as defined by the Education Act 1996. Ensure compliance with national and local education policies, regulations, and guidelines.
- Provide strategic direction and guidance on education matters, advocating for excellence, equity, and inclusivity across all educational settings within the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Provide expert advice and guidance on education and learning matters to the senior leadership team and elected members, ensuring they are informed and engaged with transformation activities.





Director of Learning & Skills Role Profile (continued)



- Develop and maintain strong relationships with Elected Members, school leaders, Governing Bodies, Inspectors, and parent associations to drive positive outcomes for learners.

Strategic Direction:

- Collaborate with Chief Executive, Elected Members and Senior Leaders across the Council to integrate education and learning initiatives into broader strategic plans.
- Lead the ongoing development and implementation of a forward-thinking education and skills strategy that contributes to the transformation programme and aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan and Annual Delivery Plans.
- Lead the transformation of educational services, fostering innovation, and driving continuous improvement to meet the evolving needs of our community.
- Champion a learning culture across the organisation, ensuring that learning and education services are designed and delivered to meet the needs and expectations of our diverse communities, and align with our core values of being open, together, proud, and ambitious.

Leadership:

- Lead teams and foster a learner-focused, values-driven culture.
- Create and communicate clarity of direction and purpose for staff at all levels in the context of the strategic aims and ambitions of the Council.
- Lead, direct and inspire people within the Learning and Skills Directorate and across the Council to deliver great results. Ensure processes are in place for identifying and developing talent at all levels.
- Look for opportunities within the directorate to innovate and transform the functions to deliver continuous improvement and evolve the operation to meet the changing opportunities and challenges faced by the Council.
- Through own behaviours, be a role model for the leadership behavioural competencies; promoting and supporting the embedding of the Council's values and behavioural competencies throughout all levels of the organisation to build the organisation's culture.
- Work with colleagues to establish and embed an organisation culture that supports and promotes the right behaviours and performance to ensure the delivery of outcomes that meet the Corporate Plan and strategic objectives of the Council.

Operational Excellence:

- Oversee the effective management of educational resources, including budgets, staffing, and facilities, allocating resources to maximise impact and enhance the provision.
- Champion diversity, equity, and inclusion within educational settings, promoting access and opportunities for all learners.
- Monitor educational standards, performance, and outcomes, using evidence-based practices, fostering evidence-based improvement plans.



Director of Learning & Skills Role Profile (continued)



General Duties:

- Explore opportunities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services through collaboration and partnership working.
- Facilitate and participate in the introduction of policies, procedures, and practice to support the achievement of the objectives of the Council.
- Ensure that the principles of equality of opportunity are integrated and actively pursued both within the Directorate and in all areas of service provision.
- Ensure continuing compliance with Council policy, procedure and legislation including those related to the management of employees, health and safety, customer relations, safeguarding, information, equalities, the environment, and those specifically set out in Financial and Contract Procedure Rules.

In addition to the duties set out above, the postholder will be required to undertake such additional duties which may result from changing circumstances, but which may not of necessity change the general character or level of responsibility accorded to the post.





Director of Learning & Skills

Person Specification



1. Experience

ESSENTIAL

- Experience in providing strategic direction and guidance to improve the lives of children and young people.
- Experience in driving forward a people focused, values-driven culture across an organisation.
- Significant experience of leading mixed discipline teams, demonstrating ability to build a learner focused culture of improvement, effectiveness, and innovation.
- Experience of building high performing teams and providing inspirational leadership to the wider organisation that drive a high-performance culture.

DESIRABLE

- Local Government and/or Public Sector experience.
- Experience in liaising with government bodies, educational institutions, and community stakeholders.
- Experience of working with Elected Members and of dealing with politically sensitive issues.
- Track record of driving transformational change and innovation in an educational or children's context.

ASCERTAINED BY

- CV & Cover Letter.
- Interview.

2. Knowledge

ESSENTIAL

- In-depth understanding of the Education Act 1996 and its implications for the role of Director of Learning and Skills, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements and regulations.
- Familiarity and experience of working with national and local education policies, regulations, and guidelines, guiding the strategic direction of education within the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Awareness of the challenges and opportunities present in the education sector, with the ability to leverage this knowledge to improve educational outcomes.
- Proficiency in local government financial management, including budgeting, resource allocation, and adherence to compliance standards.

DESIRABLE

- Knowledge of the specific educational environment and community needs in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Familiarity with performance management systems and methodologies.
- A grasp of Estyn inspections' function in evaluating the quality and standards of education in schools, ensuring accountability and the ongoing search for improvement.

ASCERTAINED BY

- CV & Cover Letter.
- Interview.



Director of Learning & Skills Person Specification

3. Skills & Aptitudes	<p>ESSENTIAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to be a role model for the leadership behavioural competencies and promote the Council’s values and behavioural competencies throughout all levels of the organisation. ● A strategic thinker, with the ability to develop and implement strategies that support the achievement of organisational objectives. ● Excellent leadership skills, able to provide clarity to your team on the vision and purpose of their work. ● Strong track record of building and nurturing productive working relationships, able to advocate for educational excellence, equity, and inclusivity. ● Highly effective communication skills, able to influence others with impact and professional credibility, with the ability to communicate to a diverse community. ● Dedicated to professional development and keeping abreast of relevant regulation and education trends. ● Ability to manage resources effectively, including budgets, staffing and facilities. 	<p>DESIRABLE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to integrate education and learning initiatives into broader strategic plans. ● Skills in fostering a learning culture across an organisation. 	<p>ASCERTAINED BY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CV & Cover Letter. ● Interview.
	4. Qualifications & Training	<p>ESSENTIAL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relevant L7/Degree Qualification or equivalent experience. 	<p>DESIRABLE</p>



Director of Learning & Skills
Person Specification (continued)

5. Attitude & Motivation	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	ASCERTAINED BY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highly motivated senior leader, able to act as a role model to team members and peers. ● Adaptable and flexible to meet a variety of challenges. ● An inspiring leader, able to engage team members to deliver exception performance in a challenging environment. ● Innovative, change champion, who is happy to challenge the status quo to deliver on strategic objectives and solve problems. ● A passionate role model of the values of the Council. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interview.
6. Other	ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE	ASCERTAINED BY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal and professional credibility. ● Drive, energy and enthusiasm to sustain an extensive agenda. ● Capacity to work outside of normal office hours and attend evening meetings as and when required. ● Ability to drive/travel throughout the Vale or between locations as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to speak or learn Welsh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Application form. ● Interview.