

FM Interview Briefing - 'People Behind Politics'

Date and time	13:50 – 16:00, Thursday 1 February 2024
Location / Link	Cardiff and Vale College, Dumballs Road, Cardiff, CF10 5FE. Redacted – Section 40 will meet you at the entrance on Dumballs Rd.
Parking	Please drop off the FM at the Dumballs Road entrance. Space held at CAVC car park, if needed, at One Canal Parade.
Contact at media org	Redacted – Section 40
Interviewer	Redacted – Section 40
Timings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13:50 – Arrive. Redacted – Section 40 will meet you. You will meet Redacted – Section 40 for a chat before filming begins. • 14:00 – You will be filmed walking into the building with Redacted – Section 40. You will travel up to the 4th floor. • 14:00 – 14:30: Q&A with CAVC students. A Level Class with Teacher, Redacted – Section 40, will chair. CAVC have arranged for students from various courses to ask you questions, similar to your recent visit to Gower College. • 14:30 – 15:00: You lead a chat with 5 or 6 students selected by the college (see 4 in briefing). The group will be from diverse backgrounds and ages and can talk about their course, their background, why they're studying at the college etc. Some students will be receiving WG support (see 3). CAVC is a College of Sanctuary, so there may be students who have sought sanctuary in Wales. • 15:00 – Photo with students, Redacted – Section 40 and the Principal, Redacted – Section 40 • 15:00 – 16:00: Go to the café/canteen area. You will buy a coffee/tea there, to film you interacting with staff, before sitting down with Redacted – Section 40 for an hour-long interview. • 16:00: Depart.
Press officer	Redacted – Section 40
Dress code etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not formal - please wear a jumper rather than a suit. • Please bring a card/change to buy a coffee.
Briefing below	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People Behind Politics - background 2. Redacted – Section 40 – bio 3. WG support for 16+ students 4. Event briefing from CAVC

1. Background – People Behind Politics

Redacted – not in scope for relating to misinformation, public messaging strategy, or reputational risk

2. Redacted Section 40 – bio

Redacted – Section 40

3. What support do we provide for learners aged 16+?

Education Maintenance Allowance

- EMA is a means-tested allowance paid to 16-, 17- and 18-year-olds who stay in education after compulsory school leaving age. EMA provides financial assistance to a wide group of young people living in low-income households in order to broaden participation and to improve the retention and attainment of young people in post compulsory education.
- The EMA £40 a week (paid fortnightly) allowance supports over 15,000 a year. Payment of the allowance is in accordance with their agreed learning plan and confirmed attendance. Payments are made directly to the young person (unless otherwise instructed) by the Student Loans Company.
- EMA was uplifted to £40 a week in April 23 (previously £30) in recognition of the increasing costs young students are facing as they make decisions to continue into, and remain in, post-16 education. At that time, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language made a commitment for the higher rate of £40 per week to be made available for new and continuing students for two academic years while an independent review of the EMA Scheme was carried out. The review is currently underway.
- EMA application forms are made available from the Spring each year in readiness for the start of the academic year; these forms, and accompanying notes, are available in hard copy from the young persons school or prospective college and are available to download from the Student Finance Wales website.
- In October 23, the Student Loans Company launched an electronic platform for EMA applications, removing the requirement for a hard copy application to be completed and posted.
- Raising awareness of the EMA Scheme is done in partnership with our schools and colleges. Welsh Government also raise awareness of the Scheme through the Dysg newsletter and social media campaigns. Careers Wales can also provide information about the EMA Scheme.

Welsh Government Learning Grant (over 19s)

- For eligible learners aged 19 or over and studying full or part time in college, our means-tested Welsh Government Learning Grant (FE) of up to £1,500 is available to help with any additional costs.

- Full time is up to £1,500, paid each year of study. Part time is up to £750 a year.

Personal Learning Accounts (over 19s)

- A Personal Learning Account (PLA) is a programme funded by Welsh Government which allows those who meet the criteria below to access free courses and professional qualifications that develop their skills and help progress or change their career.
- PLA courses provide the skills and qualifications that local employers are looking for. They focus on sectors that are growing in this region and where there is currently a need for people with these skills. Designed to be flexible and work around your life and commitments, the goal is that at the end of the course or courses, there will be well-paid job vacancies available for you to apply for.
- Eligibility criteria:
 - Aged 19 or over, living in Wales and any of the below;
 - Earning under the median income: £30,596
 - Working on a zero-hour contract
 - At risk of being made redundant
 - Agency staff
 - Full-time carers (paid or non-paid)
 - Offenders on day release

Financial Contingency Fund (FCF)

- The FCF provides financial support for eligible learners at FE colleges. It can be used for childcare costs, transport, meals, equipment and learning materials.
- In September 2023 The Minister for Education and Welsh Language announced a 6.5% increase to the Financial Contingency Fund for 2023/24 to help alleviate some of the issues faced by vulnerable learners in the cost-of-living crisis.

Help with transport costs

Learners aged 16-19 may be eligible for help with their further education transport costs: <https://www.gov.wales/help-further-education-transport-costs>

Free Welsh Lessons for 18-25 year olds

18 to 25 year olds can enrol on Welsh courses with the [National Centre for Learning Welsh](#), and will not be asked to pay when registering.

The commitment is part of the [Co-Operation Agreement](#) with Plaid Cymru.

Young Person's Guarantee

- The Young Person's Guarantee, which includes the programmes, ReAct+ and Jobs Growth Wales+ is the Welsh Government's key commitment to providing everyone under the age of 25, living in Wales, with support to gain a place in education or training, and help to get into work or become self-employed.
- ReAct+ offers tailored solutions which may include financial support, skills training and Personal Development Support to help remove barriers to employment, such as support with mental health, confidence building, language skills and more.
- Jobs Growth Wales+ is a training and development programme for 16–18-year-olds that gives young people the skills, qualifications and experience they need to get a job or further training.
- There is an estimated annual £50m loss of European Social Fund (ESF) funding for employability programmes. We have already used YPG funding to ensure we can continue some activity such as Communities for Work Plus.
- Communities for Work Plus is a community-based Employability Programme delivered in partnership with Local Authorities across Wales. Mentors based within community venues across Wales provide intensive advice and guidance to participants on how to overcome barriers to employment, sustain employment and to be better off in employment. The Minister for Economy has approved the expansion of CfW+ from April 2023 with funding to local authorities of £27.3m and £24.8m in 2023/24 and 2024/25 respectively.

4. Event Outline – provided by CAVC

Redacted – not in scope for relating to misinformation, public messaging strategy, or reputational risk
