

# Meet Wales' real-life Apprentices



**You're hired! Real  
Welsh Apprentices**

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IT WAS the television phenomenon that concluded with two high-flying women pitting their wits against each other to achieve their ultimate goal.

The final of *The Apprentice* saw 5.7 million tune in to see 26-year-old Michelle Dewberry, *below left*, secure a £100,000 job at the head of one of computer tycoon Sir Alan Sugar's companies.

Having beaten off all the male competition, former telecommunications chief Michelle Dewberry was left to fight it out with ex-sales manager Ruth Badger, 28, for the grand prize. The dominance of women in the series has been held up as an example of the

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ever-strengthening female input in the world of business.

But the victory of blonde Michelle, widely seen as the prettier of the two candidates, has also raised questions about how much of a benefit good looks can be when it comes to getting ahead in the workplace. Armed with a series of questions about their approach to the modern world of work, the *Western Mail* tracked down some of Wales' real-life Apprentices – three young female high achievers already aiming for the top without any help from Sir Alan.



**IN CONTROL** Sarah Jenkins, operations and admin clerk at Premier Forest Products. 'One of the boys at work said I'm quite like Ruth. I punched him!'

**Sarah Jenkins**

**Age:** 25  
**Job:** Operations and Administration Clerk, Premier Forest Products  
**Based:** Newport  
**Joined:** 2001  
**Michelle approval rating:** \*\*\*\*

**What did you think of The Apprentice?**  
"I only watched the final, but I thought it was a great opportunity for the pair of them. I wasn't sure which of them I was supporting, it

was a bit of a mix – both of them had qualities. Ruth was quite a strong character and Michelle was a bit quieter. They had different strengths in terms of the way they went about things. I think the reason Michelle won was because Ruth proved she could survive on her own and was very headstrong, whereas Michelle needed to be led a bit more and I think that's what he wanted – an apprentice."  
**Do looks matter in the**

**workplace?**  
"Definitely. I wouldn't say it happens everywhere, but if you're in a customer focused environment, it would be nice to have someone good-looking. I think it can also help people get ahead in the office because I think people are sub-consciously drawn towards good looking people."  
**What's your working style?**  
"One of the boys at work said I'm quite like Ruth. I punched him! But I do think she knows what she

wants, I can identify with that. I wouldn't say I'm not a team player, but I like to get things done, and I like to be in control of what's happening."  
**Would you go on The Apprentice?**  
"I would definitely have a go – I think it's the money that appeals to me. The idea that millions of people would be watching all my mistakes on telly would be a bit off-putting, but I think I would handle it."