

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Philip Blaker
Chief Executive
Q2 Building
Pencarn Lane
Imperial Park
Coedkernew
Newport
NP10 8AR

3 June 2020

Dear Philip,

I'm writing in relation to the recent notification to your sponsorship team of a proposed decision that you were preparing to take, under the pre-notification requirements included as part of an addendum to your framework agreement. This proposed decision relates to the appeals process you are planning to establish for the calculation of grades following the cancellation of this year's summer exams due to Covid-19. You have followed the pre-notification process as you believe that this proposed decision is likely to be novel and contentious.

I am grateful to you for drawing this proposed decision to the Welsh Government's attention and affording us the opportunity to consider it before a final decision on the process is taken by your Board.

Given the unforeseen circumstances the pandemic has created this year, necessitating the cancellation of the summer exams and the processes that are being established to enable the calculation of grades, it is vital that a fair and transparent appeals process is established to support learners who will not have the opportunity to take their exams this summer.

The importance of this was clearly highlighted in the Direction that the Minister for Education made on 6th April. This Direction set out the Welsh Ministers' policy regarding the cancellation of the exams, whilst recognising that the operational detail of how this is achieved is a matter for you to determine as the independent regulator.

Parc Cathays
Caerdydd
CF10 3NQ

Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Ffôn • Tel: 03000250706

Ebost • Email: steve.davies49@gov.wales

The Welsh Government Sponsorship team, in collaboration with the Public Bodies Unit and the Corporate Governance Unit has considered this proposed decision, your rationale for it and the steps you have taken, and are proposing to take, to seek to ensure a fair and transparent process. This proposed decision has also been noted by Tracy Burke, as the Additional Accounting Officer, and by the Minister for Education.

As such, I would like to confirm the Welsh Government's in principle support for this proposed decision. I recognise that the timescales within which we are all having to work are incredibly challenging and as such you have had to notify us of this proposed decision at an early stage of the decision-making process, as such this agreement is subject to the following caveats:

- A full and detailed analysis of the consultation responses is undertaken and published;
- The publication of the decision provides clear justification about why this course of action is reasonable and highlights any additional mitigating actions, further to those already outlined in the consultation, that will be put in place to safeguard the rights' of learners, and
- That the appeals process that you establish is monitored and reported on in a transparent way.

I note that you have convened an Extraordinary Board meeting to consider and ratify the decision regarding the appeals process and that you will also be meeting with the Minister, prior to the announcement of this decision.

I would like to thank you and you staff for all of your hard work during this extremely challenging time, and the efforts that you have taken to ensure that my team are kept fully engaged.

Yours sincerely



Steve Davies
Director of Education / Cyfarwyddwr Addysg