

Jeremy Miles AS/MS
Gweinidog y Gymraeg ac Addysg
Minister for Education and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref : MA/JMEWL/0062/4

David Jones OBE, DL
Chair of Qualifications Wales
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February 2024

Dear David,

Term of Government remit letter for Qualifications Wales

I am writing to confirm the remit and grant allocation to Qualifications Wales for 2024-25. The grant is made to allow Qualifications Wales to carry out its functions as set out in the Qualifications Wales Act 2015.

Section 3 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015 requires Qualifications Wales to achieve the principal aims of ensuring qualifications and the Welsh qualification system are effective for meeting the reasonable needs of learners in Wales; and promoting public confidence in qualifications and the system. The Act also requires Qualifications Wales to have due regard to the matters listed in section 3(2) when considering what is appropriate for achieving those principal aims.

Section 51 of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015 requires Qualifications Wales to provide advice and information to Welsh Ministers on matters relating to qualifications and the qualifications system in Wales. My officials will write to you to request advice as appropriate.

As you are aware, the Welsh Government does not set your strategic objectives as the 2015 Act gives you a degree of autonomy as the independent qualifications regulator. You are however required to prepare an Annual Report for scrutiny by the Senedd, as well as a Business Plan detailing your operational priorities for the year ahead.

Qualifications Wales continue to make an important contribution to delivery of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government. I appreciate you have achieved significant milestones over the past 12 months with the publication of the Approval Criteria for each of the GCSEs which will form the new suite of GCSEs available from 2025. You have also

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

consulted and published decisions on your Full 14-16 Qualifications Offer, testing and confirming your proposals for what will be available to complement that new suite of GCSEs from 2027. As we have discussed, it is vital that the principles and ambitions of the Curriculum for Wales remain at the heart of this programme of qualifications reform. I recognise that you need to consider how your work fits with that of partners and the wider system to mitigate the risk of creating additional burdens on yourselves and others at this challenging time.

Wales' independent review of Vocational Qualifications has now concluded with the publication of the report. Achieving a sustainable, bilingual offer that provides learners with clear progression pathways remains my priority, together with ensuring steps are taken to mitigate the risk that reforms driven by the UK government may pose to our learners. I recognise the progress that you have made with your sector reviews and welcome your continued commitment to this important work. Following the publication of the review's recommendations, I am aware discussions continue with my officials to determine next steps, including how best Qualifications Wales can work with other partners in the education system to respond to the recommendations, and what further funding Qualifications Wales may require to make its contribution to taking these forward. I appreciate your understanding that these discussions are being progressed in the context of significant public sector budget constraints. As work continues to establish the Commission for Tertiary Education and Training (CTER), the relationship between you as qualifications regulator and this new commission will be crucial. I recognise your engagement with this development to date and look forward to your continued engagement with the Commission and wider related vocational and tertiary matters as the Commission becomes fully operational.

Over the past 12 months we have taken another important step towards pre-pandemic examination arrangements, with this year's exam series continuing that journey. I am pleased that learner well-being remains at the heart of our decision-making process, whilst also acknowledging the imperative to navigate back carefully and sensitively to pre-pandemic assessment arrangements and standards.

As a public body, you are expected to carry out sustainable development and act in accordance with the sustainable development principle set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. This includes looking to the long term, involving people, collaborating with partners, and taking an integrated and preventative approach to your work. It remains the Welsh Government's policy to add Qualifications Wales to the list of public bodies subject to the well-being duty in the WFG Act. Confirmation of this position and the commencement date will be provided separately.

I have written to you separately to set out the funding available for 2024-25. We will continue to work closely with you to manage in-year cost pressures referenced in the grant offer letter and to consider how best to meet your future needs.

As a sponsored Public Body, this letter should be read in conjunction with your Framework Document which formalises the oversight arrangements in place with your sponsorship branch.

Yours sincerely

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