



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-P/KW/0162/18

Lynne Neagle AM,
Chair
Children, Young People and Education Committee's
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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31 January 2018

Dear Lynne,

Thank you for your letter dated 8 January which raises a number of questions on Welsh medium text books for qualifications following the Children, Young People and Education Committee's scrutiny of Qualifications Wales' annual report for 2016-17.

May I begin by saying that I am committed to doing all that I can to ensure that appropriate resources for qualifications are available to our practitioners and learners, in both Welsh and English at the same time. That is why last spring I held a summit with relevant stakeholders to look into how we can work together to find solutions to the delays with the production of some resources that we experienced during the latest round of reforms to qualifications.

Looking to the future, equal rights for both languages needs to be at the centre of planning for the new curriculum for Wales. Let me reassure you that the specific needs of Welsh medium teaching and learning will be fully considered as the arrangements for the new curriculum structure, including assessment arrangements, are developed.

Turning to your specific questions, responsibility for defining what 'sufficiency' means in relation to the availability of resources to support the delivery of qualifications rests with Qualifications Wales as the independent regulator.

Work on identifying the teaching and learning resources needed to support the reformed qualifications began in 2014 when Welsh Government brought together a group of key stakeholders, including WJEC, the regional education consortia and from 2015, Qualifications Wales. We supplemented this by establishing panels of practitioners to consider specific Welsh medium requirements in order ensure the Welsh Government focussed its support where it was most needed.

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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.

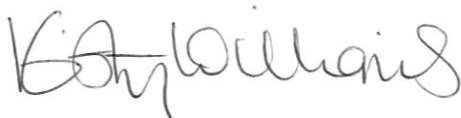
The Welsh Government, within the annual budget for commissioning educational resources, allocates grant funding to WJEC to produce Welsh-medium versions of textbooks which are produced by commercial publishers in England to support the WJEC specifications. Up to £1.3m has been awarded over the 2016-18 financial years. The WJEC also provides a guaranteed sales purchase scheme to the publisher as part of the grant arrangement. This ensures that Welsh-medium and bilingual schools are provided with free copies of the resources published.

In the case of subjects where textbooks are not produced in either Welsh or English, WJEC have produced a range of bilingual digital materials which are free of charge to schools and are available on the resources section of the WJEC's website. Welsh Government also commissioned additional Welsh-medium resources following holding a series of resources needs identification panels between summer 2015 and autumn 2017. It also grant funded the regional consortia over £3.4m in 2016-17 and £2m in 2017-18 to provide support to schools to prepare to deliver the new qualifications which included the development of resources in both Welsh and English.

On the suggestion of combining the production of Welsh-medium text books with other text books, the publishing of educational textbooks is market driven with commercial publishers deciding on which titles to commission. While the Welsh Government has no power over commercial decisions made by these companies, my officials continue to liaise with publishing houses to consider options for the future.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kirsty Williams', written in a cursive style.

Kirsty Williams AC/AM

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Addysg
Cabinet Secretary for Education