

CYPE(5)-01-21 - Paper to note 2

Senedd Cymru

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg

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Welsh Parliament

Children, Young People and Education Committee

At|To: David Jones, Chair, Qualifications Wales

Dyddiad | Date: 10 December 2020

Pwnc | Subject: **Qualifications Wales Annual Report 2019-20**

Dear David,

I am writing to you following the Children, Young People and Education Committee's scrutiny of the Qualifications Wales Annual Report 2019-20 at its meeting on 3 December 2020. Thank you for your attendance at this meeting, during what continues to be a busy time for Qualifications Wales.

We value the hard work of Qualifications Wales staff, and we recognise that considerable challenges remain not only for the regulator, but for learners and teachers in Wales as preparations are made for conducting assessments during 2021.

We share the view you set out to us in Committee that the full breadth of the education sector needs to come together to deliver a solution for learners. As a Committee, we will consider the outcomes from the Design and Delivery Group once available, and the implementation of the Minister's decisions over the spring.

Your evidence session with us raised two issues in particular that we discuss below.

Firstly, on the matter of public understanding and communication. You made it clear to us that one of the principal lessons you learned during 2020 was the need for more stakeholder engagement and better public understanding of the eventual plans for assessment in 2021. This in the context of a strengthened learner voice. We agree with this assessment and welcome your constructive openness on the subject. We also noted the findings of the internal audit of your communications activity, and expressed our view as to the importance of effective communication.

We would therefore be grateful if you could set out to us in correspondence the actions you are taking in relation to the lessons learned about public understanding and stakeholder engagement, and the actions you are taking in relation to the communication findings of your internal audit.



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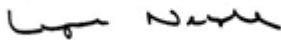
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As part of this, it would be very helpful if you could detail how you will ensure the visibility and clarity of messaging and engagement around vocational qualifications, and the communication of your decisions, reasonings and activity in this more complex area. Looking ahead to next year, we think it would be helpful to our successor committee if your Annual Report could explicitly set out progress against these matters, and your communication and stakeholder engagement objectives, particularly with learners.

Secondly, in your evidence to us, you argued that there will need to be a “recovery of standards” to ensure qualifications still function as stakeholders expect them to. Whilst this is a matter for the near-future rather than now, we believe that it will require careful consideration and reflection. As such, we think it would also be helpful to our successor committee if your next Annual Report reported on this, and you gave a view as the independent regulator on this important matter.

Thank you once again to you and the Qualifications Wales team for your engagement with our work during 2020 – we look forward to working with you in the approach to the Senedd election, as we draw our scrutiny work as a Committee to a close.

Yours sincerely,



Lynne Neagle MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.