

**CYPE(6)-17-22 - Paper to note 13**



Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff CF99 1SN

17 August 2022

Dear Jeremy,

I write requesting an urgent call for action to amend existing Welsh Government contracts with specialist further education colleges.

These colleges are commissioned by Welsh Government to meet the education and training needs of young people with complex additional learning needs. There is currently no mechanism for fee adjustments to ensure colleges can continue to meet the needs of learners who have already started their learning programme. This funding gap has historically been accommodated by colleges, but is now unsustainable due to unprecedented inflationary pressures for the sector. Colleges are facing well over 100% increases in energy bills and continue to experience increased wage bills associated with cost of living wage increases, in addition to the post Covid and post Brexit staffing crisis we brought to the attention of your officials in January 2022.

It is unreasonable to expect colleges to have foreseen these wholly unprecedented increases in running costs when negotiating contracts for learners on two and three year study programmes. Existing and future contracts must be able to accommodate the realities being experienced.

Despite your contract stating that funding is agreed annually, your officials consistently state there is no mechanism for in contract fee increases for learners on two and three year programmes. Specialist further education colleges are meeting the education and training needs of some of Wales' most vulnerable learners and your urgent attention to section 4.2 of your contract, and schedule 2 points 10 and 11 is required. It needs to unambiguously state that fee increases can be requested to ensure learner placements and life chances are not jeopardised in these unparalleled circumstances. I would be very happy to meet with you to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

Clare Howard  
Chief Executive  
cc: Children, Young People & Education Committee

